

EMBARCADERO PLAZA HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW (HRR) REPORT

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
[24146A]

PREPARED FOR
SAN FRANCISCO RECREATION AND PARK DEPARTMENT

SUBMITTED TO
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I. PROPERTY INFORMATION

This Historic Resources Review (HRR) application and report has been prepared for Embarcadero Plaza (Block/Lots 0233/035, 3714/018, 3714/001, 3714/015, 3714/014, 3714/012, 3714/013, 3714/011, 3714/002) in San Francisco's Financial District (**Figure 1**). Embarcadero Plaza is a municipal public park maintained by the Recreation and Park Department (RPD), is zoned P (Public) and is in an Open Space height and bulk district.

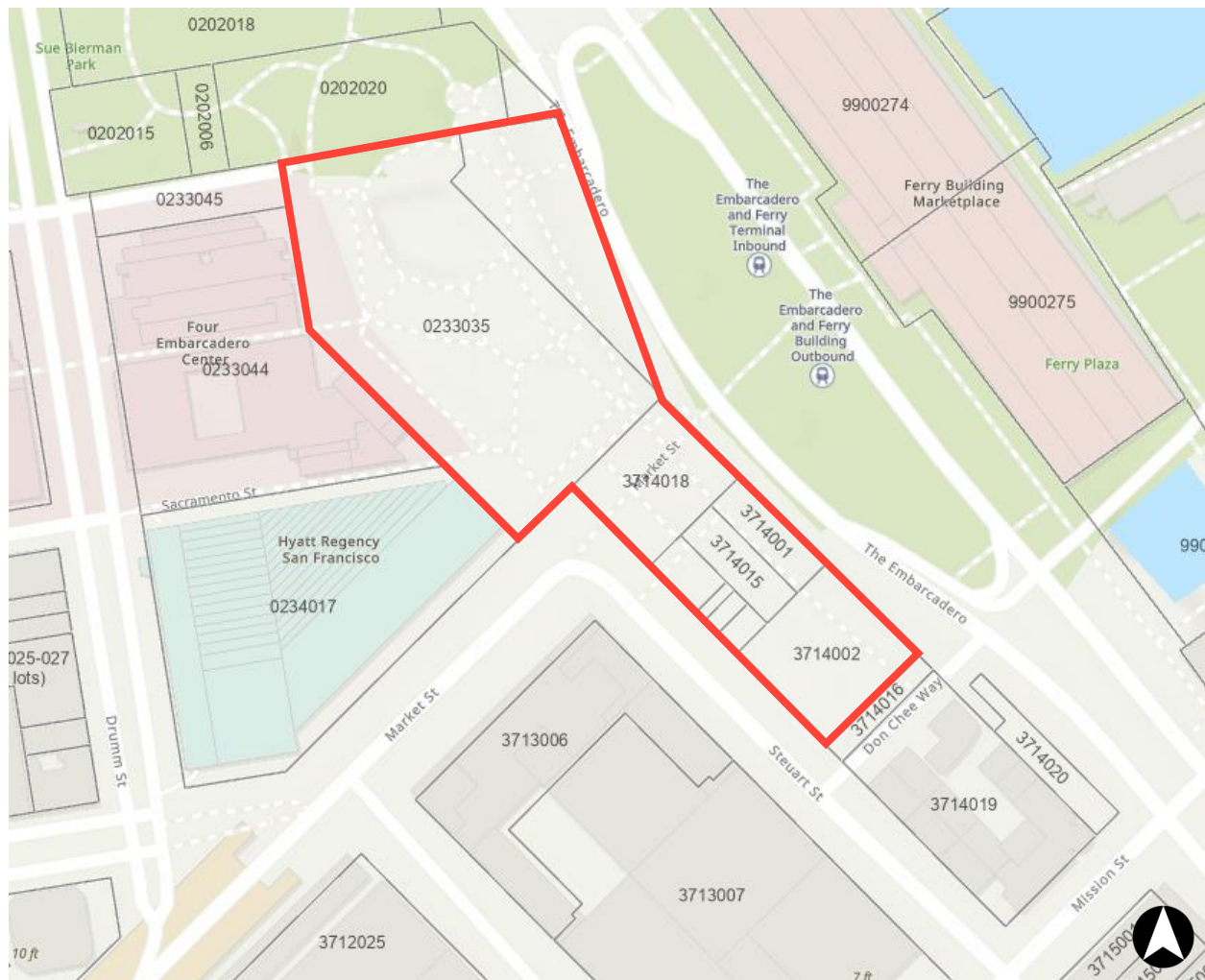


Figure 1. Parcel map with the boundaries of Embarcadero Plaza outlined with red line.
Source: San Francisco Property Information Map, edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 2. Parcel map with the boundaries of Embarcadero Plaza outlined with red line.
Source: San Francisco Property Information Map, edited by Page & Turnbull.

Embarcadero Plaza is located at the eastern terminus of Market Street. It is separated into northern and southern portions that are connected by perpendicular circulation axes, located centrally and along the eastern edge. The central (east-west) axis of the plaza connects Market Street to The Embarcadero and Harry Bridges Plaza via a wide pedestrian promenade. Along the eastern edge of the plaza, an allée of Canary Island palm trees and an elevated concrete pedestrian walkway from the north-south axis. Embarcadero Plaza North is occupied by an irregularly shaped brick plaza, which encompasses the Vaillancourt Fountain at the northeastern corner and several temporary, elevated padel courts in the center. To the south of the padel courts, concrete steps around the perimeter of the brick plaza step down into an open space, with an elevated circular platform integrated at the eastern side. At the western side of the Embarcadero Plaza North, there is a

concrete patio with fixed picnic tables and an allée of deciduous trees adjacent to Embarcadero Center. Embarcadero Plaza South is occupied by two bocce ball courts and a small parking lot at the southwestern corner. Along the eastern side, there are stepped concrete walls and accessible ramps.

Embarcadero Plaza is bordered by Sue Bierman Park to the north; Harry Bridges Plaza, the Ferry Building, and piers along The Embarcadero to the east; early twentieth-century multi-story commercial buildings to the south; and the Embarcadero Center (1971-1981) and Hyatt Regency Hotel (1973) to the west.

Embarcadero Plaza was constructed as part of the Golden Gateway redevelopment project (officially named the Embarcadero-Lower Market Project Area E-1), under the auspices of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA), and was designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin in a joint venture with architects Mario Ciampi and John Savage Bolles. The Modernist plaza was fully completed in 1972. Referred to as Ferry Park during early planning, the park was then known as Embarcadero Plaza until it was renamed Justin Herman Plaza in 1974, and then renamed back to Embarcadero Plaza in 2017.¹ Both the north and south portions of Embarcadero Plaza were renovated by ROMA Design Group in 2001. Embarcadero Plaza includes two pieces of public art in the City and County of San Francisco Civic Art Collection, which is managed by the San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC): Vaillancourt Fountain (1971, SFAC Accession No. 1971.46) by sculptor Armand Vaillancourt and Abraham Lincoln Brigade Monument (2007-2008, (SFAC Accession No. 2008.3) by Ann Chamberlain and Walter Hood.² The sculpture *La Chiffonnière* ("Rag Woman," 1978) by Jean Dubuffet appears to be sited within the boundaries of Embarcadero Plaza, but is part of the privately-owned Embarcadero Center art collection. The plaza has also hosted temporary public art installations, such as "R-Evolution" by Marco Cochrane which was installed in April 2025 and is anticipated to remain at the site for six months.³

Embarcadero Plaza contributes to a California Register of Historical Resources (California Register)-listed Market Street Cultural Landscape District. This HRR provides a summary of the existing historic status and prior historic evaluation findings for Embarcadero Plaza, current photographs of the site and surrounding properties, and a chronology of design, construction, and alterations. As

¹ "Justin Herman Plaza," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 23, 1974, 4; and Dominic Fracassa, "SF Park commission strips Justin Herman's name from Embarcadero plaza," SFGate, November 17, 2017, accessed February 12, 2025, <https://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/SF-parks-commission-strips-Justin-Herman-s-name-12363778.php>.

² "The Embarcadero Fountain," San Francisco Arts Commission, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info/1460>; and "Abraham Lincoln Brigade National Monument," San Francisco Arts Commission, accessed March 17, 2025 <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info/3359>.

³ "R-Evolution to Debut in Embarcadero Plaza, A Celebration of Public Art & Civic Revitalization," San Francisco Recreation & Parks, press release, March 18, 2025, accessed April 28, 2025, <https://sfrecpark.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2146>.

the property has been previously evaluated and documented, additional research was focused primarily on updating the chronology of alterations and including the skateboarding history at the plaza.

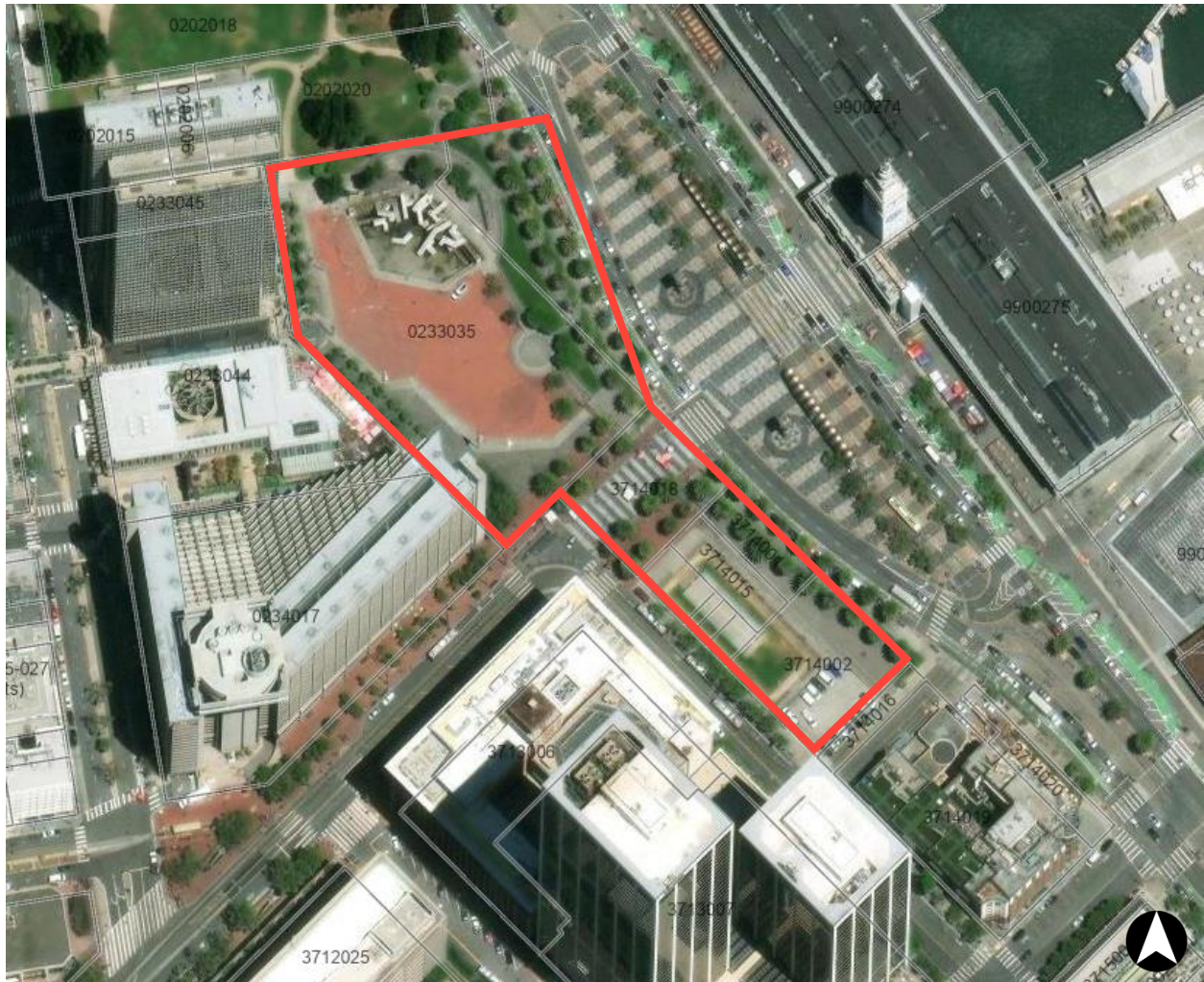


Figure 3. Parcel map with the boundaries of Embarcadero Plaza outlined with red line. Source: San Francisco Property Information Map, edited by Page & Turnbull.

Existing Historic Status & Prior Evaluation Findings

According to the San Francisco Property Information Map, the parcels comprising Embarcadero Plaza are currently assigned a Planning Department Historic Resource Status of “B - Unknown/Age Eligible.”⁴ However, the Embarcadero Plaza is known to have been previously evaluated as part of the Better Market Street Project. Embarcadero Plaza is not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) or as a local Article 10 Landmark. Embarcadero Plaza is noted in the *San Francisco Modern & Postmodern Architectural Styles (1960-2000) Historic Context Statement*.⁵

As part of the 2019 Better Market Street Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review, a Cultural Landscape Evaluation (ICF 2016) evaluated a Market Street Cultural Landscape District and various potential individual resources, including Embarcadero Plaza.⁶ Embarcadero Plaza was evaluated in a State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR 523) survey forms both individually and as part of a potential historic district. Embarcadero Plaza was found to be individually significant under National Register and California Register Criterion C/3 as a significant work of Modernist landscape architecture by landscape architect of merit Lawrence Halprin, but to lack sufficient historic integrity for individual eligibility. Embarcadero Plaza was found to contribute to a National Register- and California Register-eligible Market Street Cultural Landscape Historic District, and that “features of the plaza that do retain integrity contribute as components to the integrity of the Market Street cultural landscape.”⁷ As such, the Embarcadero Plaza was assigned a status code of “3D (Contributor to a district that has been fully documented according to OHP instructions and appears eligible for listing).”⁸ The DPR form is included in **Appendix F** of this report.

The Better Market Street Project was also subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).⁹ A Historic Resources Evaluation Report (ICF 2020) was submitted to the State Historic

⁴ San Francisco Planning Department, Property Information Map, <https://sfplanninggis.org/pim/>.

⁵ Page & Turnbull, *San Francisco Modern & Postmodern Architectural Styles (1960-2000) Historic Context Statement* (prepared for San Francisco Planning Department, Adopted August 21, 2024), 184.

⁶ ICF, Cultural Landscape Evaluation: Better Market Street Project, Market Street, San Francisco, CA (prepared for San Francisco Public Works, November 2016) in “Appendix 6: Cultural Resources Supporting Information” of the Better Market Street Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR, February 27, 2019), Planning Department Case No. 2014.0012E, State Clearinghouse No. 2015012027, which was accessed online February 2025, <https://sfplanning.org/project/better-market-street-environmental-review-process#info>.

⁷ January Tavel, ICF, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms, Justin Herman Plaza (March 30, 2016), 12, included in “Appendix 6: Cultural Resources Supporting Information” of the Better Market Street Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (February 27, 2019), Planning Department Case No. 2014.0012E, State Clearinghouse No. 2015012027, which was accessed online March 2025, <https://sfplanning.org/project/better-market-street-environmental-review-process#info>.

⁸ January Tavel, ICF, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms, Justin Herman Plaza (March 30, 2016), 12.

⁹ “Environmental Review for the Better Market Street Project,” Better Market Street, accessed March 26, 2025, <http://bettermarketstreetsf.org/your-part-environmental-review.html>.

Preservation Officer (SHPO) as part of NEPA consultation and the SHPO concurred with two relevant findings:

- Embarcadero Plaza is not eligible for the National Register as an individual property (SHPO letter, April 23, 2020)
- Market Street Cultural Landscape District is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A and C and Criterion Consideration G (SHPO letter, May 22, 2020).¹⁰

According to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5024.1(d) properties that are “formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register of Historic Places” such as through a federal NEPA review process including 4(f) or Section 106, are automatically listed in the California Register. Therefore, the Market Street Cultural Landscape District is listed in the California Register, and Embarcadero Plaza is a contributing property to the Market Street Cultural Landscape District.

Vaillancourt Fountain is evaluated as an individual object in a separate HRR, prepared by Page & Turnbull and submitted to the San Francisco Planning Department in April 2025.

¹⁰ “Appendix E: Correspondence” in *Better Market Street Project: Final Environmental Assessment with Finding of No Significant Impact and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation*, prepared by the State of California Department of Transportation (September 2020), PDF pages 251 and 256 of 532.

Current Photographs

PROPERTY/ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHS

All photographs were taken by Page & Turnbull on March 27, 2025, unless otherwise stated.



Figure 4. Context view of the Embarcadero Plaza entrance from Market Street. View northeast.



Figure 5. Context view of the Embarcadero Plaza North. View east.

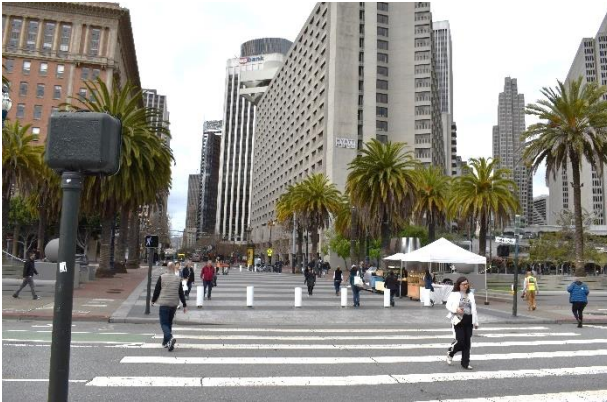


Figure 6. Context view of the central pedestrian walkway. View west.



Figure 7. Oblique view of the central pedestrian walkway. View northwest.



Figure 8. Context view of the padel courts in the Embarcadero Plaza North. View east.



Figure 9. Oblique view of sunken plaza at Embarcadero Plaza North. View northwest.



Figure 10. Detail view of semi-circular platform within Embarcadero Plaza North, with the allée of palm trees visible in the background at right. View north.



Figure 11. Sculpture entitled *La Chiffoniere* ("Rag Woman," 1978) by Jean Dubuffet, owned by the Embarcadero Center, located adjacent to the Hyatt Regency. View west.



Figure 12. Patio with fixed picnic tables and allée of trees at the northwestern side of the brick plaza.
View west.



Figure 13. The northwestern side of the brick plaza, with Sue Bierman Park visible in the background.
View north.



Figure 14. View of Vaillancourt Fountain from the steps of Four Embarcadero Center. Temporary padel courts are located south (right) of the fountain. View east.



Figure 15. Grass lawn between concrete low walls.
View east.



Figure 16. Concrete accessible ramps, staircases, and low concrete walls along the southeastern side of the plaza. View southeast.



Figure 17. Oblique view of the bocce courts at Embarcadero Plaza South, with view of the Ferry Building in the background. View northeast.



Figure 18. Oblique view of the bocce courts at the Embarcadero Plaza South. View northwest.



Figure 19. Detail view of continuous concrete tree surrounds. View northwest.



Figure 20. Detail view of typical concrete curbs at the southeast corner of the plaza. View northwest.



Figure 21. Detail view of a typical inset concrete bench. View west.



Figure 22. Detail view of palm tree with concrete surround. View south.



Figure 23. Detail view of public restroom building. View southwest.

ADJACENT PROPERTY/NEIGHBORHOOD PHOTOGRAPHS

All photographs were taken by Page & Turnbull on February 12, 2025 or March 27, 2025, unless otherwise stated.¹¹

North Side of Clay Street: Sue Bierman Park



Figure 24. Sue Bierman Park. View southeast.



Figure 25. Sue Bierman Park. View west.

East Side of The Embarcadero: Ferry Building & Harry Bridges Plaza



Figure 26. The Ferry Building (built 1896). View southeast.



Figure 27. Harry Bridges Plaza (built 2000). View northeast.

¹¹ Building construction dates are sourced from the San Francisco Planning Department, Property Information Map.

South Side of Market Street



Figure 28. 71-77 Steuart Street (built ca.2004); Don Chee Way & Steuart Street MUNI depot (foreground at left, built date not listed in PIM).



Figure 29. 1 Market Street (built 1917). View south.



Figure 30. 55 Spear Street (built 1979). View south.

West Side of Embarcadero Plaza



Figure 31. The Hyatt Regency (built 1973). View south.



Figure 33. Four Embarcadero Center (built 1981), view of first story commercial areas. View west.



Figure 32. Four Embarcadero Center (built 1981). View south.

Historical photographs and maps are included in the **Appendix** of this report.

Historic Context & Design

Refer to 2016 DPR forms prepared by ICF as part of the Better Market Street EIR, included in **Appendix F**, for a full history of the site, including context about the Market Street Redevelopment Plan, urban renewal and the Golden Gateway redevelopment project area, and Lawrence Halprin.

CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY

- **1971** – Construction of Vaillancourt Fountain was completed. The fountain was designed by Québécois sculptor Armand Vaillancourt, whose design was selected in a design competition run by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. The jury was comprised of the joint venture design team for Embarcadero Plaza—Lawrence Halprin, John Savage Bolles, and Mario Ciampi—and the design was later approved by SFAC, RPD, SFRA, and the Board of Supervisors.
- **1972** – Construction on Embarcadero Plaza was completed. The plaza was designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin & Associates in a joint venture with Mario Ciampi & Associates and John Bolles & Associates. The design of the plaza was integrated with Halprin's re-design of Market Street, but the plaza was part of the Golden Gateway redevelopment project undertaken by SFRA.
- **1974** – Referred to as Ferry Park during early planning, the park was then known as Embarcadero Plaza until it was renamed Justin Herman Plaza in 1974. SFRA Executive Director Justin Herman had died suddenly in 1971.¹² A bronze plaque with the new name of the plaza was installed on one of the concrete light poles in the plaza (later removed).
- **1983** – A renovation of the brick plaza was undertaken by architect William Turnbull of the firm MLTW/Turnbull.¹³ Turnbull's design included a tiered concrete seating island within irregular sides, located within the brick plaza; expanded concrete steps along the east side of the brick plaza; and an outdoor stage platform immediately adjacent to the southeast corner of the brick plaza. The stage was covered by an open, square pavilion with concrete columns and a wood lattice canopy.¹⁴ Photographs are included in **Appendix A**.
- **1989** – The Loma Prieta Earthquake severely damaged the double-decker Embarcadero Freeway.
- **1991** – The Embarcadero Freeway was demolished. Plans for a remodel of the plaza were announced, with the design spearheaded by architect Boris Dramov of ROMA Design Group.

¹² "Justin Herman Plaza," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 23, 1974, 4.

¹³ "New Embarcadero Center theater," *San Francisco Examiner*, September 15, 1982, 65; building permit application no. 8200222 (filed 1/11/1982, completed 3/4/1983); and building permit application no. 8200223 (filed 1/11/1982, completed 3/4/1983), on file at the Department of Building Inspection.

¹⁴ Note that several photographs included in the 2016 DPR forms (Image 5 and Image 6) are mis-dated to 1979, but show the features designed by Turnbull in the early 1980s.

- **1998-2001** – After long delays, renovation work by ROMA Design Group on Embarcadero Plaza (North and South) commenced along with the larger scope of the Mid-Embarcadero Roadway project for the City and County of San Francisco that included the construction of the Harry Bridges Plaza.¹⁵ Alterations included:
 - Installation of circular concrete steps at Embarcadero Plaza North, along with removal of the Turnbull-designed concrete steps, outdoor stage, and pavilion;
 - Installation of new concrete paths, low concrete walls with integrated benches, and large, concrete orbs;
 - Removal of original curved concrete wall, grass areas, and plantings, as well as square concrete light standards and low round concrete planters;
 - Replacement of original concrete pavers with dark and light gray striped paving from Market Street to Harry Bridges Plaza;
 - Removal of the lawns and concrete pavers at Embarcadero Plaza South and replacement with a sunken lawn and new brick and concrete pavers; and
 - Installation of allées of palm trees and concrete promenades along the eastern boundary of Embarcadero Plaza.
- **2001** – An original stair at the east end of Four Embarcadero Center was replaced with a new double-curved stair designed by SOM; this stair, per an agreement with RPD, encroaches into the publicly owned Embarcadero Plaza.¹⁶
- **c.2003** – The sculpture *Yin & Yang* (1992, SFAC Accession No. 2003.5) by Robert Arenson was installed in a circular planter where Sue Bierman Park meets Embarcadero Plaza. The artwork was later removed in 2013 and subsequently relocated to the San Francisco International Airport, as it was originally commissioned for the airport.¹⁷
- **2008, March 30** – The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Monument (SFAC Accession No. 2008.3) was installed northeast of the Vaillancourt Fountain.
- **2010, November** – The Embarcadero Plaza South lawn, installed in 2001, was again remodeled with two bocce courts with funding and labor provided by Laborers Local 261 Community and Training Foundation. The scope of work also included restoration of the lawn, paths, and concrete walls.¹⁸

¹⁵ M. Jasper Rubin, *A Negotiated Landscape: The Transformation of San Francisco's Waterfront since 1950* (Chicago, Ill.: Center for American Places at Columbia College Chicago: Distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 2011), <http://archive.org/details/negotiatedlandsc0000rubi>.

¹⁶ San Francisco Recreation and Park Department Revocable Permit (March 1, 2001), on file at RPD.

¹⁷ "Yin and Yang," San Francisco Arts Commission, accessed April 15, 2025, <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info/3218>; and Geri Koeppel, "'Yin Yang' Sculpture Not Returning To Embarcadero After All," Hoodline, February 23, 2016, accessed April 15, 2025, <https://hoodline.com/2016/02/yin-yang-sculpture-not-returning-to-embarcadero-after-all/>.

¹⁸ "Gavin Newsom," *San Francisco Examiner*, November 15, 2010, A4.

- **2017** – Justin Herman Plaza was renamed back to Embarcadero Plaza.¹⁹ The decision was made to remove the honorific name due to Herman's role as SFRA Executive Director in the extensive demolition in the Western Addition redevelopment project areas and its displacement of the predominantly Black and Japanese American residents and businesses in the area.
- **2017** – Waste bins were removed from the concrete patio along the western side of Embarcadero Plaza North.
- **2002, November** – The existing public toilet dating to the 1990s was removed from the central promenade and replaced with a contemporary silver public toilet.²⁰
- **2023, October** – Temporary elevated padel courts with enclosed, clear walls were installed immediately adjacent to Vaillancourt Fountain on the brick Embarcadero Plaza. Around this time a metal storage container was placed near the northeast corner of the fountain.

The 2016 DPR forms also include a detailed discussion of all original landscape features and analysis of their integrity (**Appendix F**).

BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS

No building permit applications are on file at the Department of Building Inspection related to the original construction of Embarcadero Plaza, or the 2000s remodels of the site. The only building permits on file associated with permanent structures at Embarcadero Plaza are related to the 1980s construction of an outdoor stage and seating area; copies of these building permit applications are included in **Appendix B**.

OWNERSHIP HISTORY

The properties that now comprise Embarcadero Plaza were originally developed by the 1880s into blocks of commercial buildings, and by 1905 included a mix of commercial buildings and lodging houses. The dense mix of buildings and uses persisted through the 1950s.²¹ By the 1960s, the properties on the blocks had been acquired by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency through eminent domain and were subsequently cleared.²² After the completion of the Golden Gateway Redevelopment Area project, SFRA transferred the property ownership to the City and County of San Francisco. The property is currently managed by the Recreation and Park Department, and the two public artworks in the Civic Art Collection are managed by the Arts Commission.

¹⁹ Dominic Fracassa, "SF Park commission strips Justin Herman's name from Embarcadero plaza," SFGate, November 17, 2017.

²⁰ John King, "The Future of Public Toilets Has Arrived in San Francisco — Here's What It Looks like," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 23, 2022.

²¹ Block books available through the San Francisco Property Information Map (PIM) and Sanborn Map Company fire insurance maps available through the San Francisco Public Library.

²² 1960-65 Block Book, accessed via San Francisco Property Information Map (PIM).

SKATEBOARDING AT EMBARCADERO PLAZA

The rise of modern street skateboarding in the late 1980s and early 1990s traces its early roots back to Embarcadero Plaza.²³ The wave-like curved concrete wall designed by Halprin as part of the original plaza was skated in the 1980s in a style analogous to surfing. However, it was the new stepped concrete features designed by William Turnbull in 1983 that helped give birth to more technical ledge skating in the early 1990s; photographs are included in **Appendix A**. Skateboarder James Kelch, who was part of the early 1990s scene at Embarcadero Plaza—known in the community as EMB—said that the plaza “has everything you need: you can jump stairs, you can ride the wave, jump gaps, skate the blocks.”²⁴ As stated in a recent article in SF Gate:

[Embarcadero Plaza] was the backdrop to the modern development of the sport, largely thanks to a furious period of innovation on the plaza in the early 1990s. For a few years, it seemed like every major skateboarding video part and magazine included at least some footage of skateboarders grinding the park’s iconic ledges and clearing the extra-long stair gaps. [Ted] Barrow called it “the center of the skateboarding universe” during that time and “our colosseum.” The tricks were captured on the newly released handheld cameras and then distributed globally, with skateboarders around the world inspired by what they saw as possible in San Francisco.²⁵

In addition to the innovative tricks happening at EMB being widely publicized in skateboard magazines and videos, a version of the spot was included in the popular Tony Hawk Pro Skater video game released in 1999. The Turnbull-designed features were later removed as part of the 1998-2001 remodel of Embarcadero Plaza. The former location of the stepped concrete island, known as the C-Block by skaters, is still visible due to the change in color and texture of the replacement brick in the plaza. Other than the pockmarks left in the brick by skateboard axels, the main remaining feature from this era of 1990s skate history is the concrete curb around Vaillancourt Fountain. However, the newer concrete steps and ledges installed in the 2001 renovation by ROMA Design Group also continue to be skated.

²³ Ted Barrow, “This Old Ledge: Embarcadero,” Thrasher Magazine, YouTube, July 12, 2023, accessed April 8, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXrdZ5kWRqs&list=PL7V-xVYjYY3fCEf5hj0520eKBEplyy6jZ&index=2>.

²⁴ Willy Blackmore, “The Spaces that shaped skateboarding,” Curbed, June 5, 2019, accessed April 8, 2025, <https://archive.curbed.com/2019/6/5/18652152/skateboarding-embarcadero-skatepark-history-olympics>.

²⁵ Lester Black, “They fought for this space’: SF plans to wipe away cultural landmark for \$30M park,” SFGate, March 14, 2025, accessed online March 17, 2025, <https://www.sfgate.com/local/article/skateboarders-mad-san-francisco-embarcadero-plaza-20215452.php>.

Conclusion

Embarcadero Plaza is a contributor to the California Register-listed Market Street Cultural Landscape District, which is also eligible for listing in the National Register. The intact features from the original 1972 Embarcadero Plaza design are contributing features to the historic district; as outlined in the 2016 DPR form prepared by ICF, these landscape features include:

- Placement at the easternmost boundary of Market Street
- Arrangement in an irregular pentagon-shaped plan with terraces, promenade and open space
- Pedestrian circulation along two primary axis
- Brick plaza paving
- Presence of an allee of trees along the western boundary of brick plaza (trees may have been replanted)
- Vaillancourt Fountain.²⁶

Page & Turnbull concurs with the prior findings in the 2016 DPR form that Embarcadero Plaza is historically significant under Criterion C/3 (Design) as a significant work of Modernist landscape architecture and for association with landscape architect of merit Lawrence Halprin, but that the overall design of the plaza lacks sufficient historic integrity for individual eligibility for designation in the National Register or California Register. Minor alterations to Embarcadero Plaza since 2016 have not changed the historic integrity of the site.

Page & Turnbull also concurs with the prior findings that Embarcadero Plaza contributes to the California Register-listed Market Street Cultural Landscape District. No contributing features have been lost or altered since 2016 in a manner that would alter Embarcadero Plaza's status as a contributing property to the historic district.

²⁶ January Tavel, ICF, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms, Justin Herman Plaza (March 30, 2016), 9-11.

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- "Market Street, Embarcadero Plaza to Octavia Street, San Francisco, San Francisco County, CA: Drawings from Survey HALS CA-164" (2022), on file at HABS/HAER/HALS Collection at the

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, accessed March 4, 2025,
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.ca4485.sheet?st=gallery>.

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III. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Selected Additional Historical Maps & Photographs

This appendix includes selected additional maps and historical photographs that supplement those included in the 2016 DPR form (**Appendix F**).



Figure 34. Produce Market prior to demolition and redevelopment during the Golden Gateway redevelopment project, 1965. Embarcadero Freeway on and off ramps wrapped around the Alcoa Building and Maritime Plaza. Source: SFGate, *San Francisco Chronicle* archives.



Figure 35. Embarcadero Plaza under construction, c. 1970. Source: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Records (SFH 371), San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco History Center.

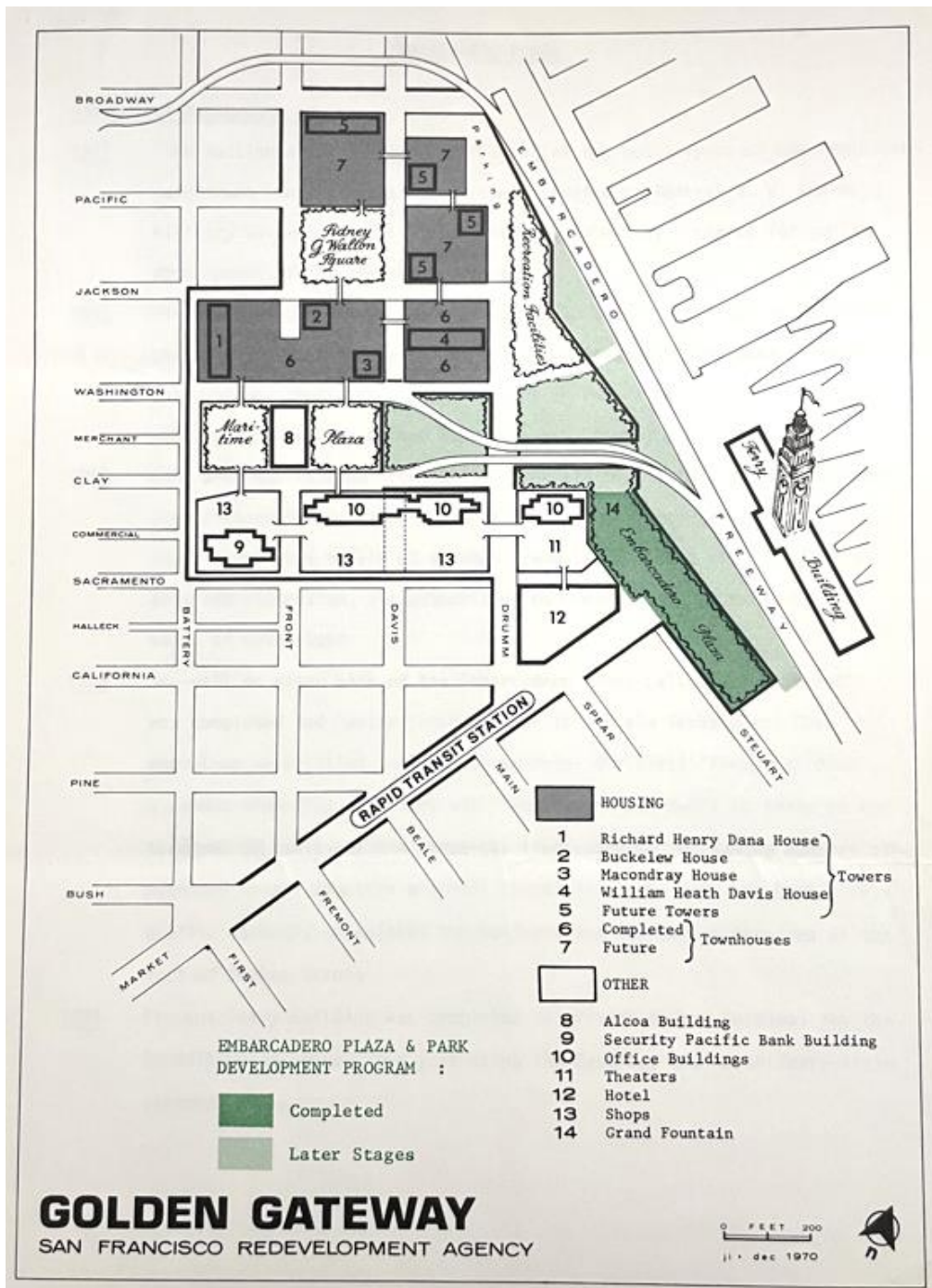


Figure 36. Golden Gateway Embarcadero Plaza & Park Development Program, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, 1986. Source: San Francisco Public Library, History Center, Subject Collection, S.F. Parks: Embarcadero Plaza.

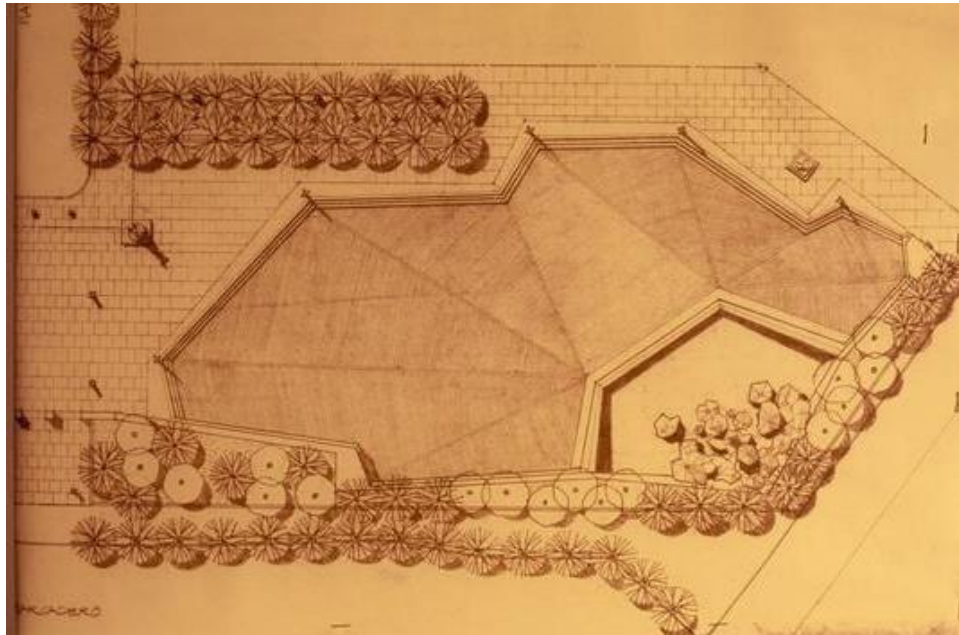


Figure 37. Drawing of the Embarcadero Plaza, showing a conceptual fountain design, c. 1966. The drawing reflects Halprin's irregular brick plaza design that is Modernist interpretation of an Italian style piazza. Source: AAR-6551, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Records (SFH 371), San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco History Center.

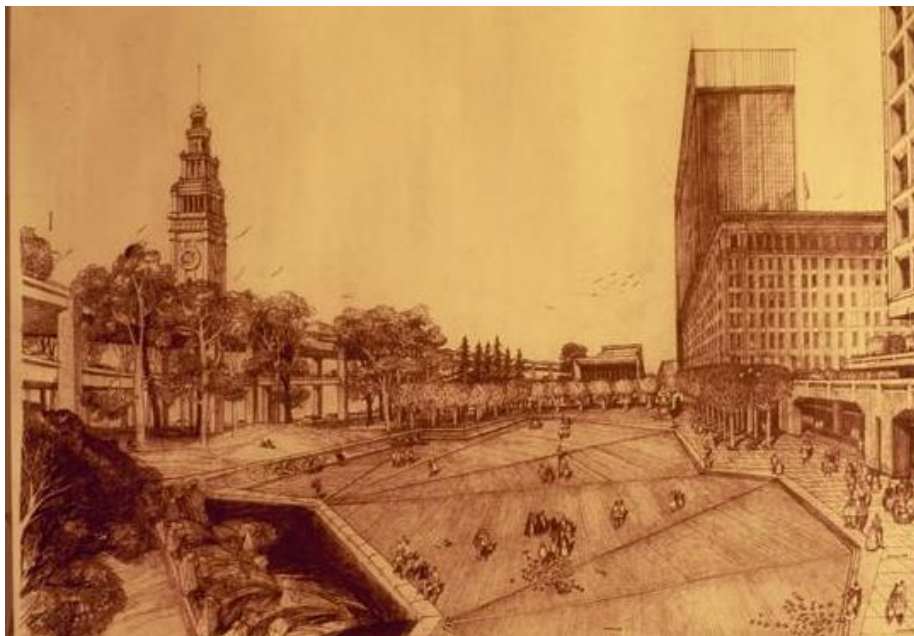


Figure 38. Perspective rendering of the Embarcadero Plaza, showing a conceptual fountain design, c. 1966. Source: AAR-6553, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Records (SFH 371), San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco History Center.



Figure 39. Opening celebration for Vaillancourt Fountain on April 22, 1971, while portions of the plaza were still under construction. Embarcadero Freeway is visible in the background. Source: *San Francisco Chronicle*.



Figure 40. Curved concrete wall around the perimeter of Embarcadero Plaza, part of the original Halprin design, was removed during the 2001 renovations. Source: AAR-6530, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Records (SFH 371), San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco History Center.



Figure 41. Curved concrete wall and square light standards, parts of the original Halprin design, were removed during the 2001 renovations. Source: AAR-6530, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Records (SFH 371), San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco History Center.



Figure 42. Rear (north and east) wall of Vaillancourt Fountain, c. 1970s, looking south over Embarcadero Plaza as originally designed by Lawrence Halprin. The photo illustrates the original curved concrete wall, grass areas and plantings, as well as square concrete light standards and low round concrete planters, which were all removed during the 2001 renovations. Source: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Records (SFH 371), San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco History Center.



Figure 43. Photograph of Embarcadero Plaza immediately after completion in 1972. Source: Alexander Fried, "An Urban Park Headed for Greatness," *S.F. Sunday Examiner & Chronicle*, May 14, 1972.



Figure 44. Embarcadero Plaza prior to renovation, c. late 1970s. Source: Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania via The Cultural Landscape Foundation.



Figure 45. Skateboarders in Embarcadero Plaza, June 28, 1988. Source: John O'Hara, *San Francisco Chronicle* via Getty Images.



Figure 46. Embarcadero Plaza was a popular street skateboarding spot in the mid-1980s and 1990s. Features shown in this photograph, including the stage and pavilion (right), tiered concrete seating island (foreground, also known as the C-Block), extended seating along the east side of the plaza (background), were designed by William Turnbull and built in 1983. These features were later removed in the 2001 remodel of the plaza.

Source: "Spot Check: EMB," *Thrasher Magazine* (May 1993).

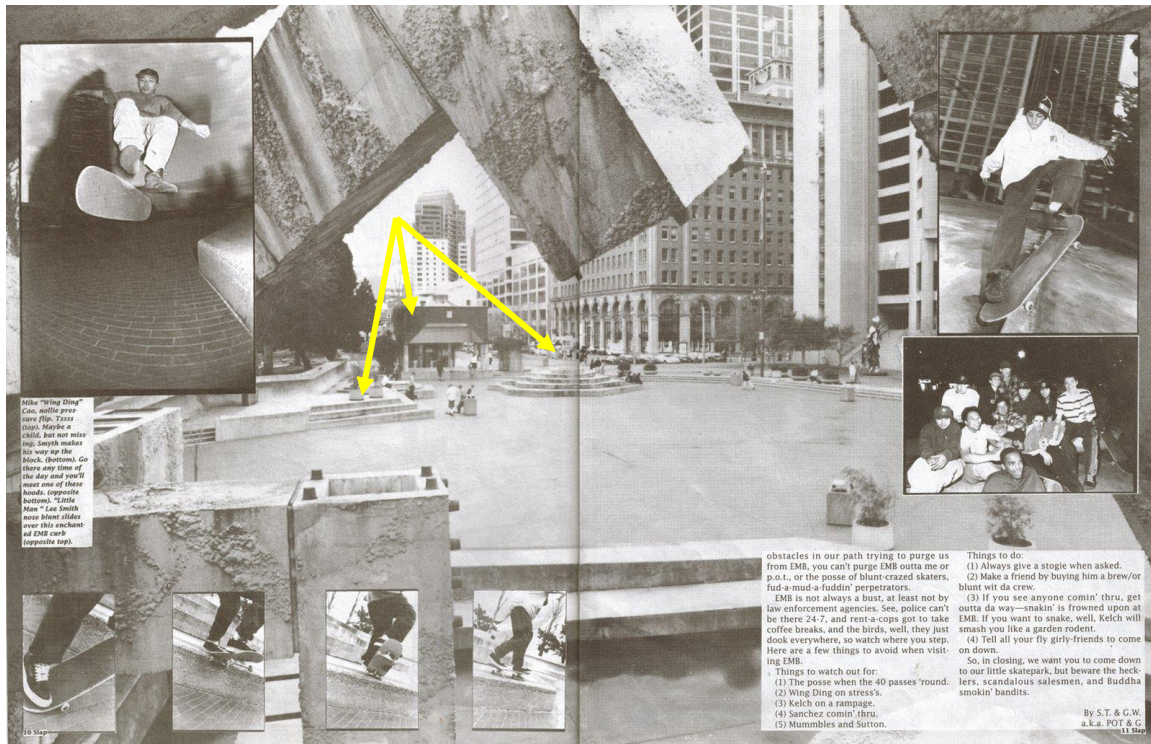


Figure 47. Magazine spread shows features added by William Turnbull in 1983 (later removed in 2001), indicated by yellow arrow. Source: *Slap Magazine* (June 1995). Edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 48. Embarcadero Plaza, between Embarcadero Center and Embarcadero Freeway, c.1983-89.
Source: John Portman & Associates.

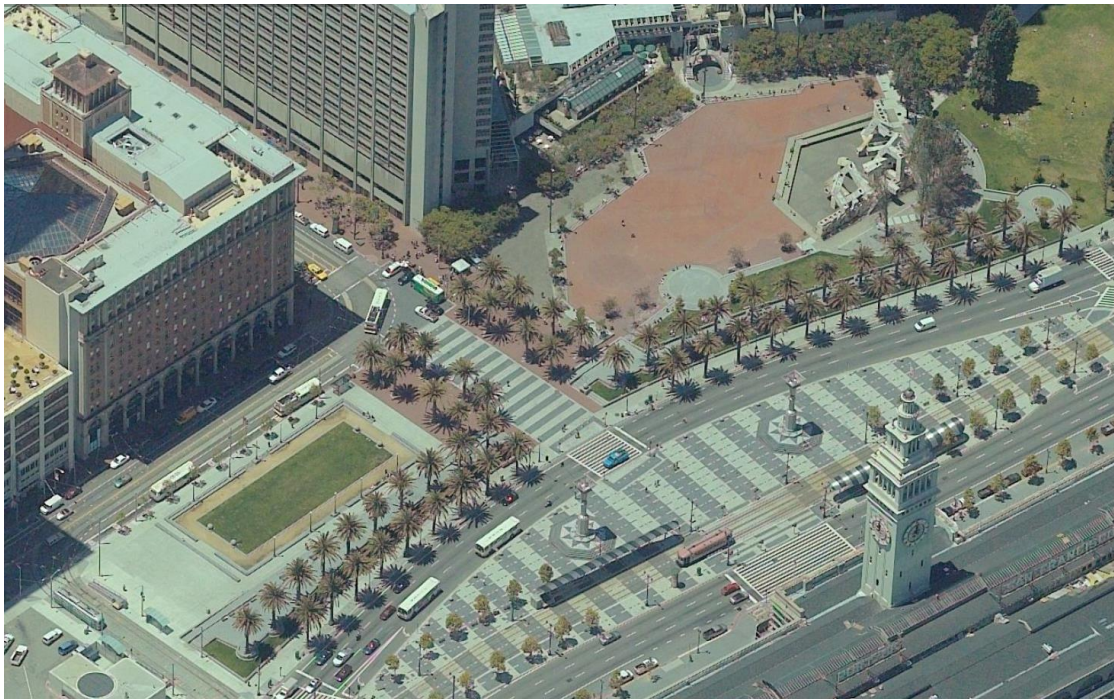


Figure 49. Bird's-eye view of Embarcadero Plaza in 2002, looking west, soon after the renovations by ROMA Design Group. Source: San Francisco Property Information Map, EagleView.

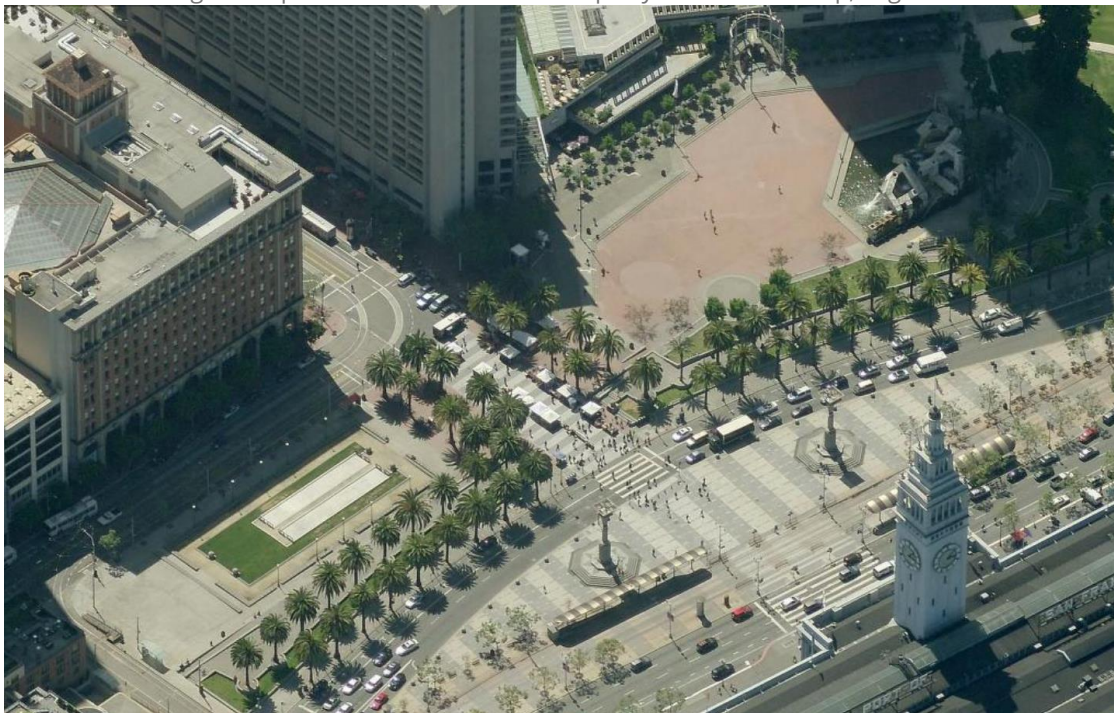


Figure 50. Bird's-eye view of Embarcadero Plaza in 2012, looking west. Bocce ball courts have been installed at Embarcadero Plaza South. Source: San Francisco Property Information Map, EagleView.

Appendix B – Building Permit Applications

Front and back pages of building permit applications currently on file with the San Francisco Department of Building Inspection. Cancelled and expired permits are not included. Permits for temporary events and structures are not included.

BLDG. FORM 08200227
 100 APPLICATION OF
 UNLMD

FOR PERMIT TO ERECT
 Type (4) NO STRUCTURE
 Location South of Market & Clay
 Total Cost \$ 200,000.00
 Filled 1982

REFER TO Dept. of Health
 Bur. of Engineering

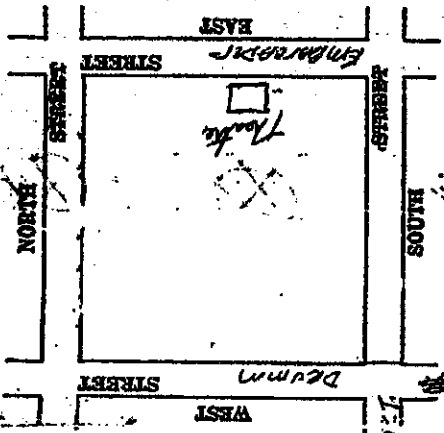
APPROVED
 Dept. Public Works
 JUL 30 1982
 R. C. Long
 SUPERINTENDENT
 BUREAU BUILDING INSPECTION

Superintendent, Bureau of Building Inspection

Permit No. _____
 Issued JUL 30 1982 19____

Certificate of Final Completion:
 Issued _____ 19____

Grade lines as shown on drawings accompanying this application are assumed to be correct. If actual grade lines are not the same as shown revised drawings showing correct grade lines, cuts and fills together with complete details of retaining walls and wall footings required must be submitted to this bureau for approval.



Lot No. 25
 Assessor's Block No. 233

NO PORTION OF BUILDING, STRUCTURE OR SCAFFOLDING TO BE CLOSER THAN 5 FT. TO ANY WIRE CONTAINING 120 VOLTS OR MORE OR 5 FT. FOR LESS THAN 120 VOLTS, CALIFORNIA STATE LAW (SEE SEC. 481 OF BUILDING CODE).

I AGREE TO COMPLY WITH ALL CONDITIONS OR stipulations OF THE VARIOUS BUREAUS OR DEPARTMENTS NOTED ON THIS APPLICATION.
 Robert C. Long
 OWNER'S AUTHORIZED AGENT

Approved:
 SPECIAL INSPECTIONS AND TESTS
 SET IN INSPECTIONS AND TESTS
 ARE REQUIRED AS PER BUILDING
 CODE SECTIONS 305 A, B & C.
 Approved: David G. ...
 Civil Engineer, Bureau of Building Inspection

Department of Public Health
 Approved: Rec. of Public Health Res. 12741
 1-14-82 D. ...
 ALL ENCROACHMENT IN THE OFFICIAL STREET OR SIDEWALK AREAS MUST BE GRANTED IN WRITING BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS OR BY RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS. ALL RAMPING TO BE INSIDE PROPERTY.
 Approved: ...
 Bureau of Engineering

Approved for: ...
 Art Commission
 APPROVED FOR: ...
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
 Approved: ...
 7/22/82

Approved:
 Zone ...
 CPC Subback ...
 Approved: ...
 1/15/82 ...
 Department of City Planning

Approved:
 Robert C. Long
 Bureau of Fire Prevention & Public Safety
 Approved: ...
 5/19/82

Approved:
 Thomas C. ...
 Bureau of Building Inspection
 Approved: ...
 7/22/82

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BLDG. FORM

CENTRAL PERMIT BUREAU

1

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT
FOR TYPE 1-2-3-4 STRUCTURES

Date 12 January 1982

Application is hereby made to the Department of Public Works of the City and County of San Francisco for permission to build in accordance with the plans and specifications submitted herewith and according to the description and for the purpose hereinafter set forth:

LOT DESCRIPTION

(1) Location:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North <input type="checkbox"/> East side of <u>Market Street</u> <input type="checkbox"/> South <input type="checkbox"/> West	Name of Street
<u>500</u> feet	<input type="checkbox"/> North <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> East of <u>Drum Street</u> <input type="checkbox"/> South <input type="checkbox"/> West	Nearest Cross Street
(2) Size of lot: front <u>30-36</u> ft. rear <u>50</u> ft. average depth <u>26-42</u> ft.	(3) Is any other building on lot? If yes, show on plot plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
	(4) Is automobile runway to be installed or altered?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
	(5) Will street space be used during construction?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

(6) Type of Building:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13 <input type="checkbox"/> 14 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 16 <input type="checkbox"/> 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21 <input type="checkbox"/> 22 <input type="checkbox"/> 23 <input type="checkbox"/> 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26 <input type="checkbox"/> 27 <input type="checkbox"/> 28 <input type="checkbox"/> 29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 <input type="checkbox"/> 31 <input type="checkbox"/> 32 <input type="checkbox"/> 33 <input type="checkbox"/> 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 <input type="checkbox"/> 36 <input type="checkbox"/> 37 <input type="checkbox"/> 38 <input type="checkbox"/> 39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41 <input type="checkbox"/> 42 <input type="checkbox"/> 43 <input type="checkbox"/> 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 <input type="checkbox"/> 46 <input type="checkbox"/> 47 <input type="checkbox"/> 48 <input type="checkbox"/> 49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50 <input type="checkbox"/> 51 <input type="checkbox"/> 52 <input type="checkbox"/> 53 <input type="checkbox"/> 54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56 <input type="checkbox"/> 57 <input type="checkbox"/> 58 <input type="checkbox"/> 59 <input type="checkbox"/> 60 <input type="checkbox"/> 61 <input type="checkbox"/> 62 <input type="checkbox"/> 63 <input type="checkbox"/> 64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 <input type="checkbox"/> 66 <input type="checkbox"/> 67 <input type="checkbox"/> 68 <input type="checkbox"/> 69 <input type="checkbox"/> 70 <input type="checkbox"/> 71 <input type="checkbox"/> 72 <input type="checkbox"/> 73 <input type="checkbox"/> 74 <input type="checkbox"/> 75 <input type="checkbox"/> 76 <input type="checkbox"/> 77 <input type="checkbox"/> 78 <input type="checkbox"/> 79 <input type="checkbox"/> 80 <input type="checkbox"/> 81 <input type="checkbox"/> 82 <input type="checkbox"/> 83 <input type="checkbox"/> 84 <input type="checkbox"/> 85 <input type="checkbox"/> 86 <input type="checkbox"/> 87 <input type="checkbox"/> 88 <input type="checkbox"/> 89 <input type="checkbox"/> 90 <input type="checkbox"/> 91 <input type="checkbox"/> 92 <input type="checkbox"/> 93 <input type="checkbox"/> 94 <input type="checkbox"/> 95 <input type="checkbox"/> 96 <input type="checkbox"/> 97 <input type="checkbox"/> 98 <input type="checkbox"/> 99 <input type="checkbox"/> 100	(8) Occupancy B-4 Bldg. Code Classification	(9) Number of Dwelling Units - 0 -
(7) Use of building Outdoor Theater	(10) Ground Floor Area 300 2408 Sq. Ft.	(11) Height at the Center Line of Front of Bldg. 25 Ft.	
(12) Number of Stories 1	(13) Number of Basements - 0 -	(14) Is building designed for additional stories? <input type="checkbox"/> yes; how many? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	
(15) Total Cost \$175,000.00	(16) Will sub-sidewalk space be used? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	(17) Design Live Load for floors: (To be posted, in commercial and industrial buildings)	

- (18) Supervision of construction by Dinwiddie Construction Address _____
- (19) General Contractor Dinwiddie Construction California License No. 9072
Address P.O. Box 7410, S.F., CA 94120 Telephone 982-8635
- (20) Architect or Engr. MLTW/Turnbull Assoc. California Certificate No. C-5411
(for design) Address Pier 1-1/2, S.F., CA 94111 Telephone 986-3642
- (21) Engineer or Archt. Rutherford & Chekene, California Certificate No. 1429
(for construction) Consulting Engineers Address 487 Bryant St., S.F., CA 94107 Telephone 391-3990

I hereby certify and agree that if a permit is issued for the construction described and approved in this application, or in accompanying plans, all the provisions of all the laws and ordinances applicable to the construction will be complied with. I further agree to save San Francisco and its officials and employees harmless from all costs and damages which may accrue from the use or occupancy of the sidewalk, street, or sidewalk space, or from anything else in connection with the work authorized by this permit, or any work performed on or at the premises designated therein. The foregoing covenant shall be binding upon the owners of said property, the applicant, their heirs, successors and assignees.

(22) Owner City & County of San Francisco - Recreation & Park Dept.

Address Mc Clain & Lodge Phone No. 982-8635 (R. Schaeffer)
(For contact by Bureau)

By R. E. Schaeffer Address P.O. Box 7410, S.F. CA 94120
R. E. Schaeffer, Dinwiddie Const.
Owner's Authorized Agent to be Owner's Authorized Architect, Engineer or General Contractor

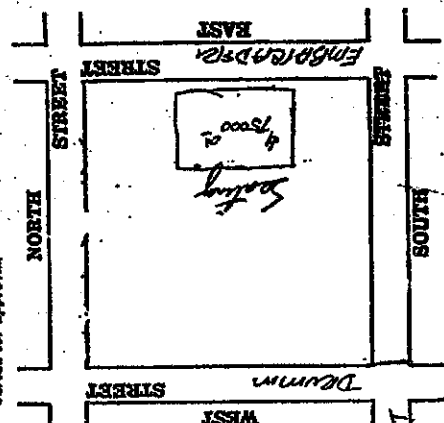
THIS PERMIT AND THE APPROVED PLANS MUST BE KEPT ON THE JOB

BLDG. FORM
084003823
APPLICATION
MED
OWNER

FOR PERMIT TO ERECT
Type STRUCTURE
Location Settling Tank Embarras St.
John S. Morhart & Chy
Total Cost \$ 75000
Filed 164700
REFER TO Dept. of Health
Bur. of Engineering

APPROVED
JUL 30 1982
Dep't. Public Works
Superintendent, Bureau of Building Inspection
Permit No. 492238
Issued Jul 30 1982
Certificate of Final Completion:
Issued 19

Henry Siegel
Grade lines as shown on drawings accompanying this application are assumed to be correct. If actual grade lines are not the same as shown revised drawings showing correct grade lines, cuts and fills together with complete details of retaining walls and wall footings required must be submitted to this bureau for approval.



Lot No. 35
Assessor's Block No. 233
TO PORTION OF BUILDING, STRUCTURE OR SCAFFOLDING TO BE CLOSER THAN 8 FT. TO ANY WIRE CONTAINING 750 VOLTS OR MORE OR 3 FT. FOR LESS THAN 750 VOLTS. CALIFORNIA STATE LAW (SEE SEC. 801 OF BUILDING CODE).

I AGREE TO COMPLY WITH ALL CONDITIONS OR STIPULATIONS OF THE VARIOUS BUREAUS OR DEPARTMENTS NOTED ON THIS APPLICATION.
Robert C. Lange
OWNER'S AUTHORIZED AGENT

AND TESTS
AND TESTS
AND TESTS
CODE SECTIONS 900.10, 900.11, 900.12, 900.13, 900.14, 900.15, 900.16, 900.17, 900.18, 900.19, 900.20, 900.21, 900.22, 900.23, 900.24, 900.25, 900.26, 900.27, 900.28, 900.29, 900.30, 900.31, 900.32, 900.33, 900.34, 900.35, 900.36, 900.37, 900.38, 900.39, 900.40, 900.41, 900.42, 900.43, 900.44, 900.45, 900.46, 900.47, 900.48, 900.49, 900.50, 900.51, 900.52, 900.53, 900.54, 900.55, 900.56, 900.57, 900.58, 900.59, 900.60, 900.61, 900.62, 900.63, 900.64, 900.65, 900.66, 900.67, 900.68, 900.69, 900.70, 900.71, 900.72, 900.73, 900.74, 900.75, 900.76, 900.77, 900.78, 900.79, 900.80, 900.81, 900.82, 900.83, 900.84, 900.85, 900.86, 900.87, 900.88, 900.89, 900.90, 900.91, 900.92, 900.93, 900.94, 900.95, 900.96, 900.97, 900.98, 900.99, 900.100, 900.101, 900.102, 900.103, 900.104, 900.105, 900.106, 900.107, 900.108, 900.109, 900.110, 900.111, 900.112, 900.113, 900.114, 900.115, 900.116, 900.117, 900.118, 900.119, 900.120, 900.121, 900.122, 900.123, 900.124, 900.125, 900.126, 900.127, 900.128, 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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BLDG. FORM

CENTRAL PERMIT BUREAU

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT
FOR TYPE 1-2-3-4 STRUCTURES

Date 12 January 1982

Application is hereby made to the Department of Public Works of the City and County of San Francisco for permission to build in accordance with the plans and specifications submitted herewith and according to the description and for the purpose hereinafter set forth:

LOT DESCRIPTION

(1) Location: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North <input type="checkbox"/> East side of <u>Market Street</u> <input type="checkbox"/> South <input type="checkbox"/> West		Name of Street
<u>400</u> feet <input type="checkbox"/> North <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> East of <u>Drum Street</u> <input type="checkbox"/> South <input type="checkbox"/> West		Nearest Cross Street
(2) Size of lot: front <u>330</u> ft. rear <u>500</u> ft. average <u>210</u> ft. depth <u>198</u> ft.	(3) Is any other building on lot? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no If yes, show on plot plan.	
(4) Is automobile runway to be installed or altered? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no		
(5) Will street space be used during construction? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

(6) Type of Building: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Hr. <input type="checkbox"/> N			
(7) Use of building <u>Seating</u>		(8) Occupancy B-4 Bldg. Code Classification	
(9) Number of Dwelling Units - 0 -		(10) Ground Floor Area <u>152.6</u> <u>26,000</u> Sq. Ft.	
(11) Height at the Center Line of Front of Bldg. 5 Ft.		(12) Number of Stories - 0 -	(13) Number of Basements - 0 -
(14) Is building designed for additional stories? <input type="checkbox"/> yes; how many? _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no		(15) Total Cost \$ 75,000	
(16) Will sub-sidewalk space be used? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no			
(17) Design Live Load for floors: (To be posted, in commercial and industrial buildings)			

- (18) Supervision of construction by Dinwiddie Construction Address _____
- (19) General Contractor Dinwiddie Construction California License No. 9072
Address P.O. Box 7410, S.F., CA 94120 Telephone 982-8635
- (20) Architect or Engr. MLTW/Turnbull Assoc. California Certificate No. C-5411
(for design) Address Pier 1-1/2, S.F., CA 94111 Telephone 986-3642
- (21) Engineer or Archt. Rutherford & Chakene, California Certificate No. 1429
(for construction) Consulting Engineers
Address 487 Bryant St., S.F., CA 94107 Telephone 391-3990

I hereby certify and agree that if a permit is issued for the construction described and approved in this application, or in accompanying plans, all the provisions of all the laws and ordinances applicable to the construction will be complied with. I further agree to save San Francisco and its officials and employees harmless from all costs and damages which may accrue from the use or occupancy of the sidewalk, street, or sidewalk space, or from anything else in connection with the work authorized by this permit, or any work performed on or at the premises designated therein. The foregoing covenant shall be binding upon the owners of said property, the applicant, their heirs, successors and assignees.

(22) Owner City & County of San Francisco - Recreation & Park Dept.

Address _____ Phone No. R. Schaeffer (982-8635)
(For contact by Bureau)

By R. E. Schaeffer Address P.O. Box 7410, S.F. CA 94120
Owner's Authorized Agent to be Owner's Authorized Architect, Engineer or General Contractor

THIS PERMIT AND THE APPROVED PLANS MUST BE KEPT ON THE JOB

Appendix C – Selected Newspaper & Journal Articles

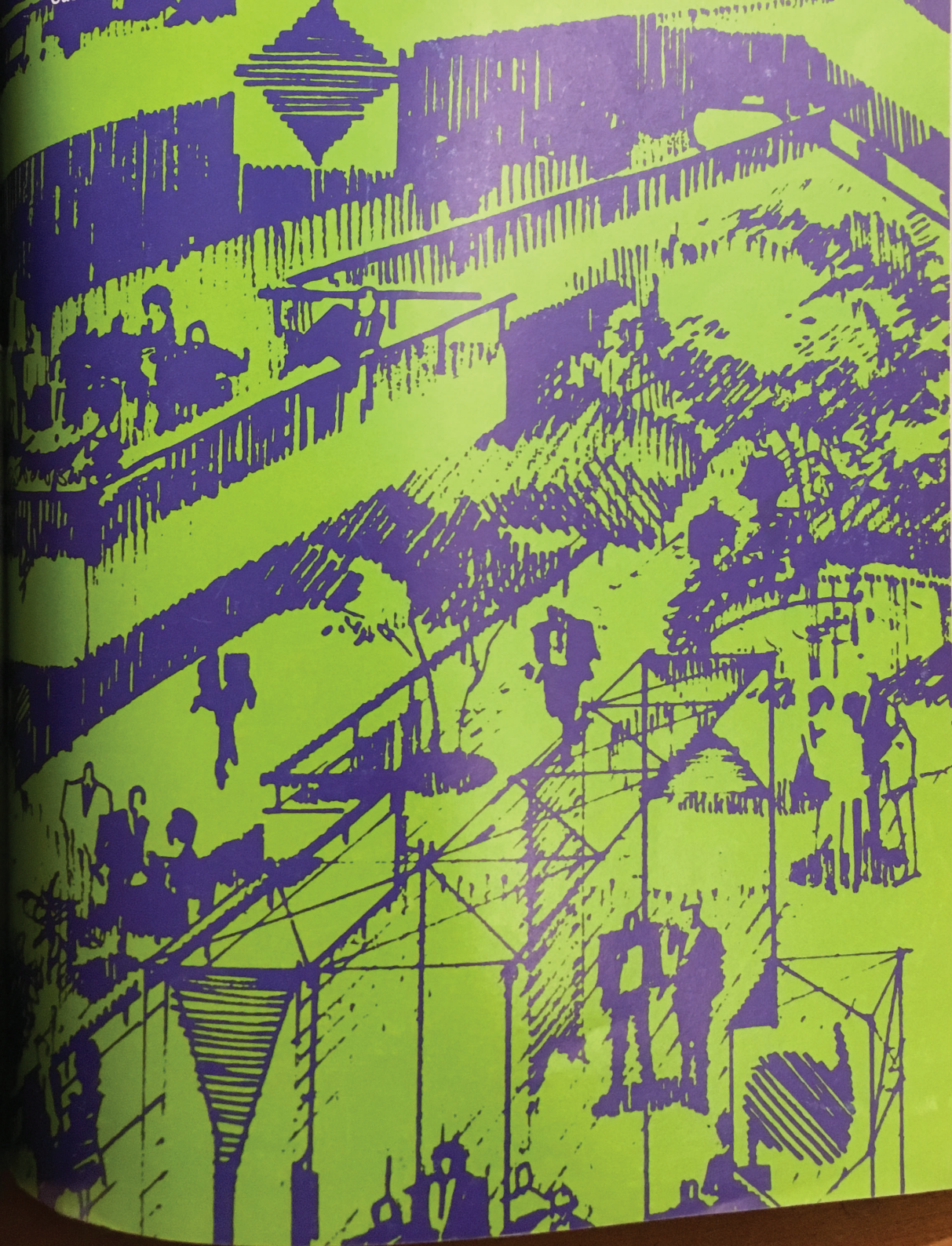
The following selected newspaper and journal articles collected during the course of research. Research included Newspapers.com, USModernist Library, and the San Francisco Public Library, History Center. The following documents are included within this appendix in chronological order:

- Wagner Green, Lois. "California to Come." *Interiors* 130, no. 12 (July 1971): 72–73.
- "Justin Herman Plaza," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 23, 1974, 4.
- Canter, Don. "Major Embarcadero Plan: Freeway Would Come Down." *The San Francisco Examiner*, no. 128 (November 7, 1974): 1.
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- Adams, Gerald D. "Market Street Plaza Urged: Task Force Seeks 'grand Civic Space' at Ferry Building." *San Francisco Examiner*, October 29, 1991, 5.
- Adams, Gerald D. "Embarcadero's Face-Lift Project Nearly Complete." *San Francisco Examiner*, November 29, 1999, 3.
- Adams, Gerald D. "Not Yet Y2K Ready." *San Francisco Examiner*, December 22, 1999, 1, 18.
- Fracassa, Dominic. "Embarcadero Plaza Loses Name of Justin Herman." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 17, 2017, 1.
- Blackmore, Willy. "The Spaces that shaped skateboarding," *Curbed*, June 5, 2019, accessed April 8, 2025, <https://archive.curbed.com/2019/6/5/18652152/skateboarding-embarcadero-skatepark-history-olympics>.
- Black, Lester. "'They fought for this space': SF plans to wipe away cultural landmark for \$30M park," *SFGate*, March 14, 2025, accessed online March 17, 2025, <https://www.sfgate.com/local/article/skateboarders-mad-san-francisco-embarcadero-plaza-20215452.php>.

July 1971

Interiors

California to Come: Projected Design Action
Residential Interiors
Casement Maintenance in Contract



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JULY 1971

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COVER

Ellen Kovalsky dramatizes a rendering of the glass-roofed galleria of the Resource Center in Los Angeles' Century City (pages 78-79).

NEXT MONTH

CHICAGO and the AID's 40TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE. The American Institute of Interior Designers' forthcoming conference (September 12-16 at the Ambassador Hotel) occasions this special section which includes "must sees" for interior designers and outstanding new Chicago interiors headed by John Portman's CHICAGO O'HARE REGENCY HYATT HOUSE HOTEL, a self-contained city built around a 23-story atrium bathed in Venetian-tinged sunlight and appointed with exquisite fantasy throughout . . . TWO NEW PRECEDENT-SETTING CONTRACT INTERIORS BY ELEANOR LE MAIRE ASSOCIATES—The Omaha National Bank and the Bal Harbour Neiman Marcus . . . NEOCON REPORT of new OFFICE LANDSCAPE furniture at NEOCON 3 . . . PREVIEW OF DESIGNERS SATURDAY.



California to come

Why California? Because the fastest growing state with the greatest geographical diversity continues to be a crucible for change.

The way California copes has bearing for all of us.

This section contains, then, cases in point—pivotal and prototypal projects to come, each in its own solution illustrating a facet of fairly universal urban design and planning problems.

These facets are both enlarged on and detailed in excerpts from addresses and workshop sessions at the recent Contract Seminar in Los Angeles and in comments of individual manufacturers, dealers and showroom personnel serving the entire West Coast.

The section concludes with a sampling of California-originated projects on the boards or in the works, culled from a survey conducted by INTERIORS of design, contract and architectural firms who are major factors in the interiors field on the West Coast*. What this survey indicates, overall, is that design is alive and well in the West.—L.W.G.

*The survey employed Sweet's Interior Design File list of the California firms entitled to receive the ID File because of the large volume of their work.

San Francisco

Embarcadero Plaza

About the implications
of an unappreciated addition
to the California scene

Planning: Lawrence Halprin & Associates
Sculpture: Armand Vaillancourt
Redevelopment agency: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency

The classical Eastern concept of esthetic perfection is that the creation be of such a nature that it can be placed and assimilated into the landscape without an obtrusive or jarring note. Given this criterion and the barren site, bound on East and North by San Francisco's unfortunate Embarcadero Freeway and on the West and South by a bleak urban wasteland that will eventually be the terminus of the new Embarcadero Center, this recently unveiled fountain sculpture — focal point of a downtown oasis — is an unqualified success.

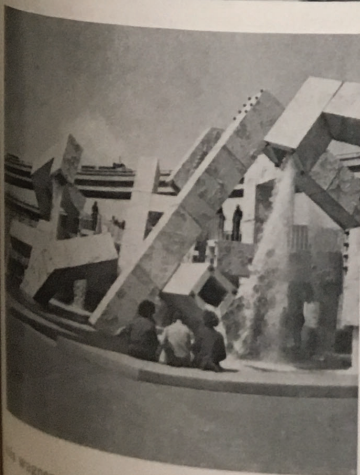
In fact, the fountain goes beyond its immediate function: whizzing vehicles on the freeway seem to weave through the concrete sculpture, giving it a kinetic urban essence and, at the same time, embracing and adding dimension to the freeway.

Whether these functions could have been better realized by a different work or another sculptor would really seem to be quite academic—the concept is the essential solution—if it weren't for the rather concerted hatchet job done on the plaza project by

the local press, and quickly taken up by the public. (San Francisco talks a good art game, but when it comes right down to it, what it wants is a gilt-edge name and/or bronze mermaids and pink marble bears.)

An immediate reaction to this adverse publicity has been the out-of-hand rejection by the Civic Design Committee of the City Art Commission of designs for a proposed new fountain near Civic Center. The committee's reaction, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, is based in part "on reservations of some members over the new Embarcadero Plaza fountain. ... Some members ... fear 'another artistic disaster'."

Neither in its site nor its design does this vetoed project, presented by joint venture architects John Carl Warnecke, Mario Ciampi and Lawrence Halprin, bear any relationship to the Embarcadero fountain. But the yahoo furor over it has set off a chain reaction of esthetic insecurity in the city which can very well affect major civic planning and design solutions.—L.W.G.



Wagner green photos

Justin Herman Plaza

Now it's "Justin Herman Plaza."

Bonnie Herman, widow of the dynamic director of the Redevelopment Agency, climbed up on a stepladder yesterday to unveil a plaque renaming Embarcadero Plaza in honor of a man who changed the face of San Francisco.

"I feel his spirit is right here," said Mrs. Herman, whose hard-driving husband died at 62, apparently of a heart attack on Aug. 30, 1971.

Herman's daughters, Jane Hill and Jennifer Herman, were at the civic ceremony, along with Mayor Joseph L. Alioto and Board of Supervisors president Dianne Feinstein.

Mrs. Feinstein, who was gallantly introduced by the new Redevelopment Agency

director, Art Evans, as the "most attractive woman here," said she knew the Ferry Building area well as a child.

The plaza lies between the glamorous new Hyatt Regency Hotel and the Embarcadero Freeway. Mrs. Feinstein said she hoped the freeway will come down soon so the parklike area can be expanded along the waterfront.

Calling Herman a "tough little cookie," Alioto said he (Alioto) had rejected advice given him his first day in office, in January, 1968, that he fire Herman.

Alioto praised Herman as being in the same class as New York's Robert Moses, saying they were both men who "could get things done, but Justin had more artistic insight."

Alioto contemptuously referred to environmentalists who successfully blocked the highrise development of the waterfront as "dyspeptic obstructionists . . . they don't want to do anything."

Alioto acknowledged that the nearby, Vaillancourt Fountain has been mocked as "freeway debris," but defended it as having "great beauty" and said it has become a major attraction for thousands of tourists who like to walk "among it."

Mrs. Herman thanked the mayor for "having the courage not to fire Justin," and said the plaza embodied "exactly the purpose he would have liked it to have."



Bonnie Herman (on ladder) unveiled plaque at ceremony with (from left) Art Evans, Jennifer Herman, Jane Hill, Mayor Alioto and Dianne Feinstein



M. JUSTIN HERMAN
He changed city's face

San Francisco Examiner

110th Year No. 128

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☆☆☆

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1974

DAILY 20c

FINAL EDITION
COMPLETE STOCKS

Freeway would come down

MAJOR EMBARCADERO PLAN

Brown--let's get to it

Special to The Examiner

SACRAMENTO — Governor-elect Edmund G. Brown Jr. met here today with Ronald Reagan, the man he will succeed in the executive mansion.

Brown said he intended to "get right down to work" in arranging for the transition of power from the Republican governor to his Demo-

cratic administration.

Brown also said he would appoint a bipartisan commission to begin screening candidates for top executive positions in his administration.

Democratic control of the legislature "is a great opportunity for the Democrats, but it's going to be short-lived if the party does not

reform itself," Brown said.

He pledged he would embark on no big new spending programs.

"If the returns mean anything, people are looking for a new spirit but they don't want to pay a lot of new taxes to achieve it," he said.

Reminded that his father, when governor, had had his troubles with a Democratic

legislature under the speakership of now newly elected state treasurer Jess Unruh, Brown quipped:

"I have Jess at my side now. If the Legislature gives me any trouble I'm going to send Unruh after them."

Mervin Field, head of the California Poll, said Brown could not consider his victory

—See Back Page, Col. 5

GOP senators want a change

- Now that the public has elected a big batch of new congressmen, what are they likely to vote for? National health insurance, for one thing. Page 10.
- A Senate seat in North Dakota and the governorship of Alaska are still undecided. Page 11.
- Across the nation, it was a good day for minorities: Two Chicano governors, two black lieutenant governors. Page 13.

Simon stands firm as economy sags

United Press International

Thousands more workers got pink slips today and sugar prices threatened to go even higher. It happened after an election that both parties said demonstrated unrest over crippling prices and high unemployment.

At the White House, President Ford and Senate Democratic Majority Leader Mike Mansfield met yesterday after the sweeping Democratic gains. They promised cooperation to try to solve the nation's economic ills.

But Treasury Secretary William Simon said in Chicago the Democratic gains would not force the administration to change its basic economic policy of resisting wage and price controls and advocating a 5 per cent tax surcharge.

"I will never give in to wage and price controls," Simon told a news conference.

He said the major economic problem still is inflation.

—See Back Page, Col. 8

INSIDE

• Swipe at home fans

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Three moderate Republican senators say the GOP must broaden its base and offer specific economic programs if it hopes to rebound from off-year election defeats. They left its national strength at a 10-year low.

The statements from Sens. Lowell Weicker Jr. of Connecticut, Charles Percy of Illinois and Charles Mathias of Maryland came as President Ford and Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield pledged cooperation yesterday despite a general expectation of conflict over economic programs.

Democratic party Chairman Robert Strauss said his party's election victories gave it a mandate to lead the attack on the nation's economic woes.

Strauss said he expects congressional Democrats to come up with a package of four or five economic bills they will try to pass early in the next session, including measures on tax revision, health care, housing and public service jobs.

"There is an inherent weakness in the entire structure of the Republican Party," Weicker said. "They are not going to win any election until they broaden the base of their party."

"The party doesn't offer much in the way of specific programs or in the way of a philosophy."

Percy said:

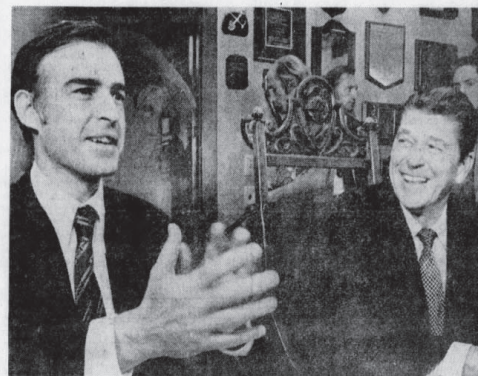
"The Republican party can rebound, but only by developing a distinct set of programs that realistically attack the problems, especially the crunching economic problems, that confront us all."

Mathias, saying that he had received support from blacks, labor and ethnic groups in his re-election, said he intends to see that the national GOP "does reach out" to such groups.

The turnout for this election was the lightest for any year since at least 1946, with an unofficial count showing 38 per cent of the voting age population cast ballots.

Nearly complete election returns showed Democrats

—See Back Page, Col. 6



PLANNING FOR THE CHANGEOVER
Governor Reagan greets Governor-Elect Brown in the executive office today —UPI Photo

\$55 million price tag on project

By Don Center
Urban Affairs Writer

Plans for a new waterfront transportation system that would include razing of the elevated portion of the Embarcadero Freeway were disclosed today by the staff of the City Planning Department.

Their study was undertaken in consultation with several City agencies, the California Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

It would, if adopted, void state plans to connect Interstate 280, which now stops at Third Street, with the Bay Bridge along a waterfront route at a cost of \$55 million.

Asst. Planning Director George Williams and planner Alan Sublimer estimate the entire project proposed today could be financed for the same sum, and built within about six years.

It calls for abandoning the waterfront route and connecting 280 to the Bay Bridge by either of two paths.

One would consist of elevated ramps along the west side of Sixth Street and the north side of Bryant.

The other would generally follow Colin B. Kelly Jr. Street.

According to the planners, the first route would require demolition of 53 businesses and 10 dwellings, while the second would take 25 businesses but no homes.

The planners suggested various stages for development.

One would demolish the Embarcadero Freeway from

—See Back Page, Col. 1

Kissinger reassures Israel

United Press International

TEL AVIV — U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger flew today to Israel on the fifth leg of his Middle East peace mission to face a nation worried the United States might bring pressure on it to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

On his arrival, Kissinger said: "There has been no change in American policy on any of the issues before us."

This was evidently aimed at easing Israeli concern raised by President Ford's recent statement indicating willingness to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon greeted Kissinger and said, "We shall do our best to see to it that the momentous (toward peace) is not lost."

Kissinger drove immediately to Jerusalem for a first working session with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Allon and Defense Minister Shimon Peres.

A senior U.S. official said Assad had eased his resistance to negotiations between

Israel and Egypt during more than three hours of talks with Kissinger in Damascus, but apparently did not flash a clear green light for the negotiations to begin.

Syria is reported to have received more than \$2 billion in recent arms aid from the Soviet Union. She backed Yasser Arafat and the PLO over King Hussein and has threatened to end the U.N. peace-keeping role on the Golan Heights.

Kissinger flew to Damascus from Amman where he said he told King Hussein he believed a "step-by-step" approach to a Middle East settlement was "the only possible one."

He noted that he had found unexpected Arab affinity in interpreting last week's controversial decision in Rabat and said he was reminded of the Japanese movie "Rashomon" in which everyone in the film gives a different version of the same event.

He said Assad had explained the Syrian interpretations of decisions taken at the Arab summit conference in Rabat and that in turn he reiterated America's willingness to proceed on a step-by-step basis "to bring a just and lasting peace in the area."

A senior U.S. official said Assad had eased his resistance to negotiations between

san francisco

New Embarcadero Road System Plan

EVER SINCE its construction in the mid-1950s, the Embarcadero Freeway, often called the 'Dambarcadero' by Herb Caen, has had its share of critics.

Originally intended to be part of a freeway link to the Golden Gate Bridge, the freeway was attacked by officials and civic organizations as a monstrosity that did little more than block the picturesque waterfront on the eastern part of the city.

Through the years there had been many calls to have it torn to the ground, but as the then Supervisor Robert Gonzales stated during conversation on the matter in 1971, "I can see no hope of demolishing the freeway in the near future. And by near future, I mean the year 2000."

But last week opponents of the freeway got some new encouragement when the city Planning Commission received plans for a new roadway system, including tearing down of the Embarcadero Freeway.

Unlike plans of the past, this proposal represented, according to the city's assistant planning director, George Williams, "a real break-through, the first time city, state and federal agencies have agreed on a way to couple the stub-ended highways with downtown streets."

The Embarcadero freeway would be replaced with surface and underground park-

way, ranging from four to six lanes wide. That part of the project was expected to cost \$10 million.

Beside calling for the Embarcadero Freeway's destruction, the plan envisioned Interstate 280 hooked up with the Bay Bridge by connecting links from either the present Sixth street exit or a Third street exit.

If Interstate 280 were connected to U.S. 80 via Sixth street, it would result in the

The freeway would be torn down

relocation of 53 businesses and ten dwelling units. By way of Third street, it would result in the relocation of 25 businesses and no dwelling units.

The overall project would include the addition of transit amenities — special bus lanes from the end of Interstate 280 to a new regional bus station at the site of the present Transbay Terminal.

The entire project would cost \$59 million and would not be completed for at least a decade.

Although federal funds for the project had not yet been committed, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to forward the report to the Board of Supervisors for public hearings.



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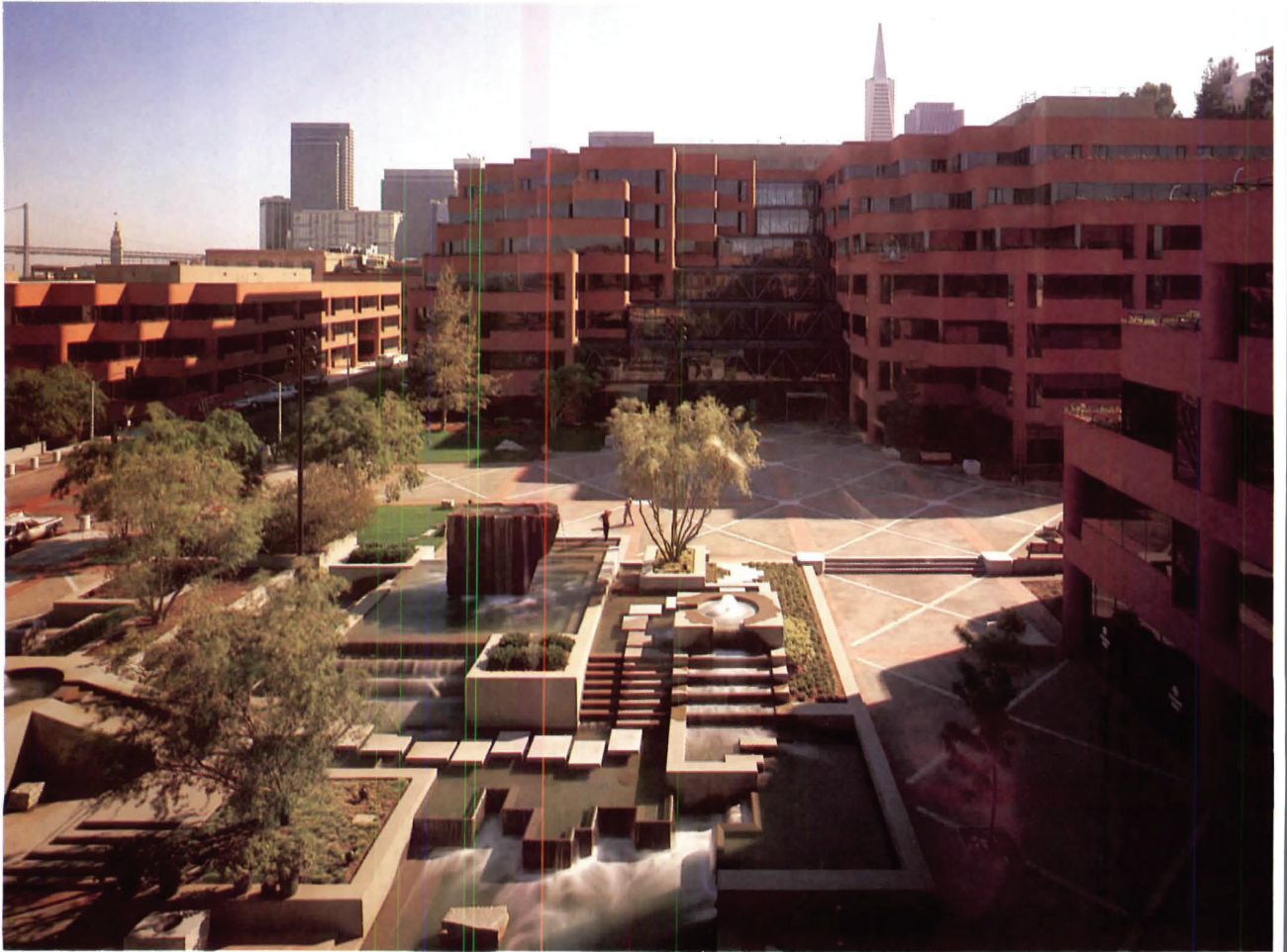
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Public Perceptions of Recent Projects

Berkeley class conducts evaluations of five buildings and spaces. By Kathryn H. Anthony

San Franciscans are unusually conscious of their physical environment, some say to the point of chauvinism. So in the city's recent surge of downtown growth each new development has been carefully scrutinized and often rigorously debated, especially in the local press and the architectural community.

What has been missing is any systematic effort to determine what the everyday person on the street thinks of these new buildings and spaces. Do those who use and visit them feel that their impact on the city has been positive or negative? During two recent summers, I asked students at the University of California at Berkeley to find some answers. They were enrolled in my course, "Social and Cultural Factors in Architectural and Urban Design." Their task was to select a site from a list of major new San Francisco design projects; to review the available literature about the site, including professional architectural criticism; to interview the project architect if possible; to observe user behavior for at least four hours in and around the site; and to interview a minimum of 50 users about their opinions of the project. Some went well beyond the minimum, observing 300 hours of behavior and surveying over 100 users. Some students also interviewed staff and management. My teaching assistants and I carefully monitored all phases of the research. The following are some of the things that we learned:

Levi Strauss Plaza by Lawrence Halprin is the anchor of the new world headquarters of the garmentmaker Levi Strauss. The plaza sits next to a set of low, terraced

red brick buildings by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum. Over half of the 11-acre site was given over to open space, adjoined in places by shops, restaurants, and other facilities.

Almost everyone we interviewed was highly satisfied with Levi's Plaza. Among their reasons: "It has a kind of friendly atmosphere, different from the hustle and bustle of the nearby Financial District." "It provides conveniences for people compared to the conditions about 10 years ago, when junky buildings occupied this land. The plaza has changed the environment drastically into a beautiful and secure place."

Most users came from nearby offices, three blocks away or closer. Only a small percentage of users were from the Levi Strauss complex itself. Most visit the plaza to have lunch, soak up some sunshine (at a premium in downtown San Francisco), to read, and to watch people. The majority of people surveyed visited the plaza several times a week.

A major design decision at Levi's Plaza was to separate the open space into two distinct areas—a "hard" and a "soft" plaza, each with a major fountain. Through the fountains, the stream, and the lush greenery of the soft plaza, the designer intended to create "a Sierra setting in the heart of the city." Most people preferred the east ("soft") to the west ("hard") plaza, citing the contoured landscape and the trees as their favorite features. They praised the fountains at each site. While using the plaza, most people felt relaxed, happy, and unrestricted. They seemed to appreciate the designer's desire to add a touch of rusticity to the urban fabric.

Across page: top, the 'soft' space at Levi's; bottom, the 'hard' court. Below, Levi's against Telegraph Hill. Above, a glimpse of Neiman-Marcus from Union Square.



Allen Freeman

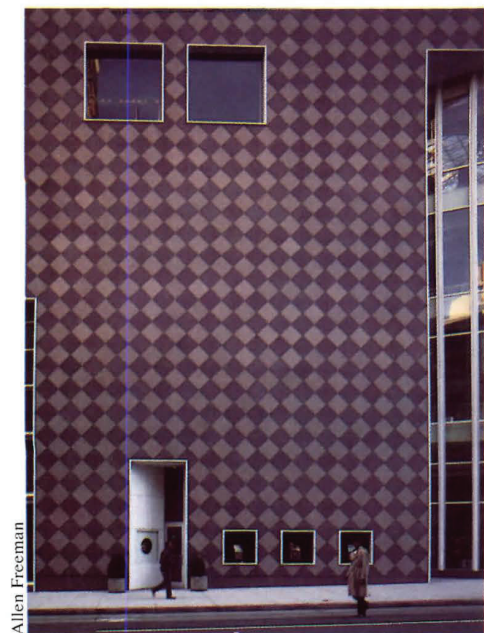
Neiman-Marcus department store faces a corner of the stately center of San Francisco's thriving shopping district, Union Square. This controversial building features a rotunda and neoclassical stained glass dome preserved from the original City of Paris department store built in 1908.

Our study indicated that people have a negative opinion of the building and that it is neither perceived nor used in the way the architect intended. Most of those interviewed felt that the building did not fit into Union Square as a whole, primarily because it was too different from its neighbors. "It's too flat and cardboardy," said one respondent. Another commented, "It's too trendy. Like current fashion, it's trying to be 'new wave.'" Most people disliked the building facade. As one put it, "I hate the checkerboard. Why can't they make a building pretty anymore?"

No one was able to understand what architect Philip Johnson, FAIA, was trying to achieve in his design. Apparently one of the architect's intentions, through his box-like shape and geometric-patterned cladding of two shades of pink granite tile, was to simulate a gift box from Neiman-Marcus to the city of San Francisco. None of our respondents caught the image. Instead, they compared it to "a pair of argyle socks," or "a clown's costume." Everyone enjoyed the old rotunda, but most felt it had been poorly integrated into the design. "It looks like a grand compromise," said one user. "Seems like tokenism," said another.

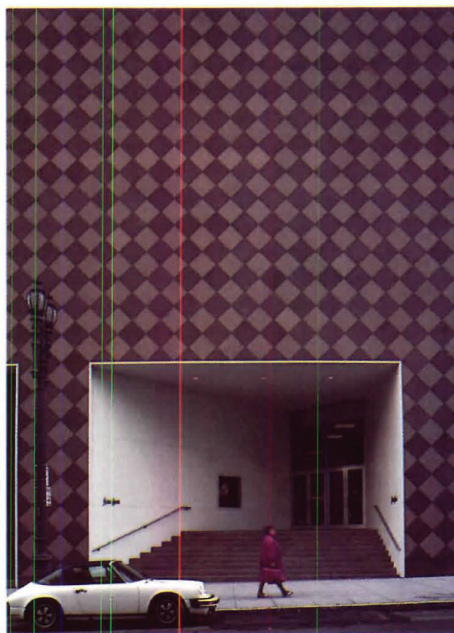


Anthony is assistant professor of architecture and of housing research and development at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She thanks the 28 students who worked on the project.



Others complained, "The building should have been designed with the rotunda in mind, rather than simply attaching a building to it"; "the rotunda looks like a caged animal." We also found that people rarely stopped to look at display windows, probably because they are very dark. Three small display windows at eye level were viewed most often, but usually by people who had just left the store.

While most people praised the architect for locating the main entryway on the diagonal facing Union Square, they found that the front doors were too heavy and difficult to operate, necessitating the hiring of a doorman. The narrow front entrance created additional difficulties. As one woman commented, "There are too many small doors and they all open out onto the sidewalk, so it seems crowded going in." Two side entrances along Geary



Top, the corner of Neiman-Marcus with caged rotunda from its predecessor building. Above, openings in side walls.

Street were rarely used. Their doors are cut into the facade and angled in such a way that they are hard to see from the street, especially when walking to the east, away from Union Square.

Justin Herman Plaza is at the foot of Market Street across from the multi-building, mixed use Embarcadero Center. Originally designed by Lawrence Halprin & Associates, John S. Bolles & Associates, and Mario J. Ciampi, FAIA, the plaza opened in 1971. The 4.2 acres of open space include a lawn area, brick-paved plaza, a five-sided irregularly shaped pool, and sculptor Armand Vaillancourt's monumental free-form fountain that recycles 30,000 gallons of water a minute. The plaza was named after M. Justin Herman,

director of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency in the early 1960s, one of the first to envision the Embarcadero Center.

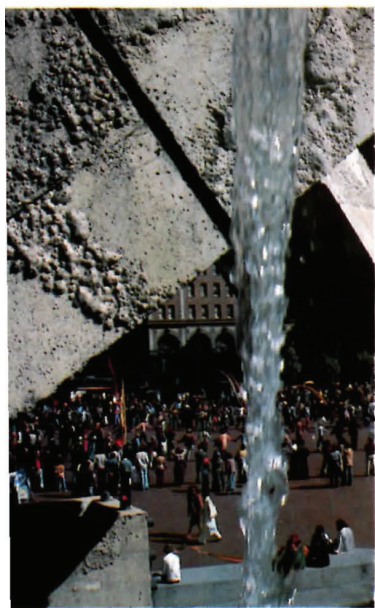
In 1982, John Portman & Associates, architects of Embarcadero Center, created some major changes in the plaza. An outdoor theater, landscaping, and a generous number of tables and chairs were added, creating a European-style open space like no other in the city. Architect William Turnbull, FAIA, was inspired by images of 19th century bandstands when designing the Plaza Theater pavillion, a simple latticed cornice resting on sonotube columns. A glass skylight sits atop the cornice. Local and traveling groups perform here seven days a week.

In addition to the standard techniques we also examined Justin Herman Plaza using the criteria developed by William Whyte in his immensely valuable book and film, "The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces." Our observations showed that overall, a slight majority of plaza users are women. On weekends, women outnumber men two to one. According to Whyte, heavy use by women often results from successful open space design.

In terms of Whyte's criteria for socially successful urban spaces, Justin Herman Plaza ranks very high, with much access to sun, fair degree of protection from wind (buildings block the westerly ocean breezes), access to water, and trees. The plaza offers many opportunities for "tri-angulation" (a term Whyte coined to denote a stimulus that gives two people something to talk about)—with the unusual Vaillancourt fountain, entertainers on stage, and street vendors. One of the most successful aspects of the plaza is its proximity to food, as numerous small restaurants and eateries line its edge and provide a wide variety of tastes and prices.

Seating is also abundant. Most people prefer to sit at the tables and chairs, and their second choice is on the steps. The fixed seating arrangements, while adequate for parties of four or fewer, caused problems for larger groups who were unable to sit together. Furthermore, the vast majority of people came alone or with only one other person. As a result, it was common to see virtually every table taken while many chairs remained unoccupied. Unlike our British counterparts, very few Americans are willing to ask to join strangers. Visitors claimed their territory, and others hesitated to intrude, causing the place to feel more crowded than it really was. Movable chairs, as Whyte suggests would be even better.

Overall, however, the space was an enormous social success, and the recent incorporation of new design elements, like the outdoor stage, drew throngs of people. In fact, about a third of those surveyed visited the plaza more than three times



... the plaza against the Embarcadero
freeway and Ferry Building. Above left,
fountain; right, Embarcadero Center.

... Most stayed between a half hour and
four, and over a quarter usually spent
an hour there. Most common pas-
ses at the plaza were relaxing, eating,
people-watching. Favorite features
were its openness, access to the sun, and
Vaillancourt fountain. In fact, almost
all tourists who entered the plaza headed

straight toward the fountain. We saw many
children climbing up and around the fountain,
screaming, and having a great time.

Children were among the greatest users
of the large open area in the middle of
the plaza. Riding bicycles, balancing on
skateboards, rollerskating, flying kites, and
chasing pigeons, they brought life to this
part of the plaza.

Complaints were very few. People liked
the pigeons and proximity to the freeway
at least. Many also asked for more trees.

One of architect John Portman's guid-
ing premises in designing Embarcadero
Center was that "architects need to redi-
rect their energies toward an environmen-
tal architecture, born of human needs,
rather than merely expressing the tech-
nology of our time. . . . My philosophy is
that buildings should serve people, not
that people should conform to the limita-
tions of buildings." Our evaluation indi-
cates that, generally, Portman's design at
Justin Herman Plaza fulfills those goals.



Above, the bridge from the garage to the pier. Left and below, the pier itself. Across page, clockwise: 101 California's cylindrical, serrated tower; the atrium lobby; the lobby from outside with its plaza and slender surrounding columns.



Pier 39, extending out into the bay, has become a major hub for Fisherman's Wharf area tourists. Designed by Walker Moody, AIA, it contains some 140 specialty shops, boutiques, and restaurants, a family entertainment center, a 350-berth marina, and a bay cruise service.

The goal of developer Warren Simmons at Pier 39 was to provide a popular restaurant, shopping, and entertainment complex for all of Northern California. In fact, we found the vast majority of our sample to be local Bay Area residents. Approximately 30,000 visitors a day come to the site.

Most of our respondents drove to Pier 39. About half were here for the first

time. The most compelling attractions for them were the picturesque views and the shops. Complaints centered around the crowds, heavy traffic, and strong winds. Some disliked the carousel and its "circus-like atmosphere." Almost all enjoyed their visit to the pier.

Observations revealed that on the upper level, the western portion of the structure was well patronized, while the eastern side had very few people. The pedestrian bridge, connecting the parking garage with the pier, drops people off on the west side. The east side is only indirectly accessible from a secondary walkway. We also noticed that paths on the west side were much more worn, needing repair.

The pedestrian bridge itself has become an attraction, and, as one of our interviewees put it, a "romantic spot for viewing the city." A few elderly people praised the bridge as a convenient way to avoid steps, which would have been difficult to maneuver.

101 California Street is a glittering 48-story tower developed by Gerald Hine and designed by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, FAIA. The tower is a cylinder, notched to provide more corner offices. At its base are a blocky concrete subsidiary structure, an angular plaza, and a glazed seven-story atrium lobby.

Our focus was largely on use of the atrium. Most people stayed in it for under

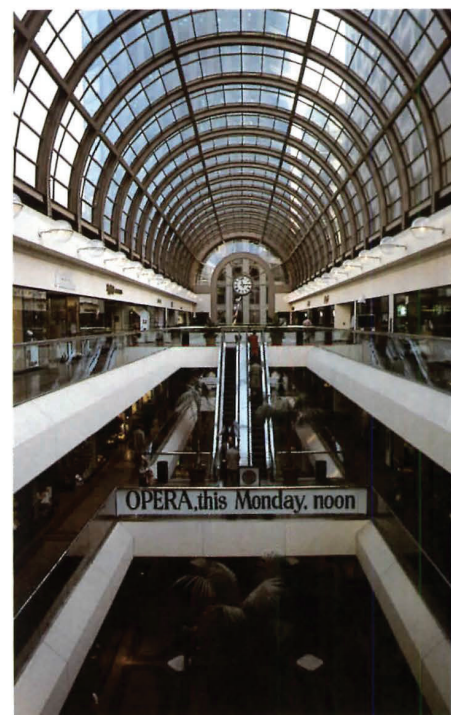
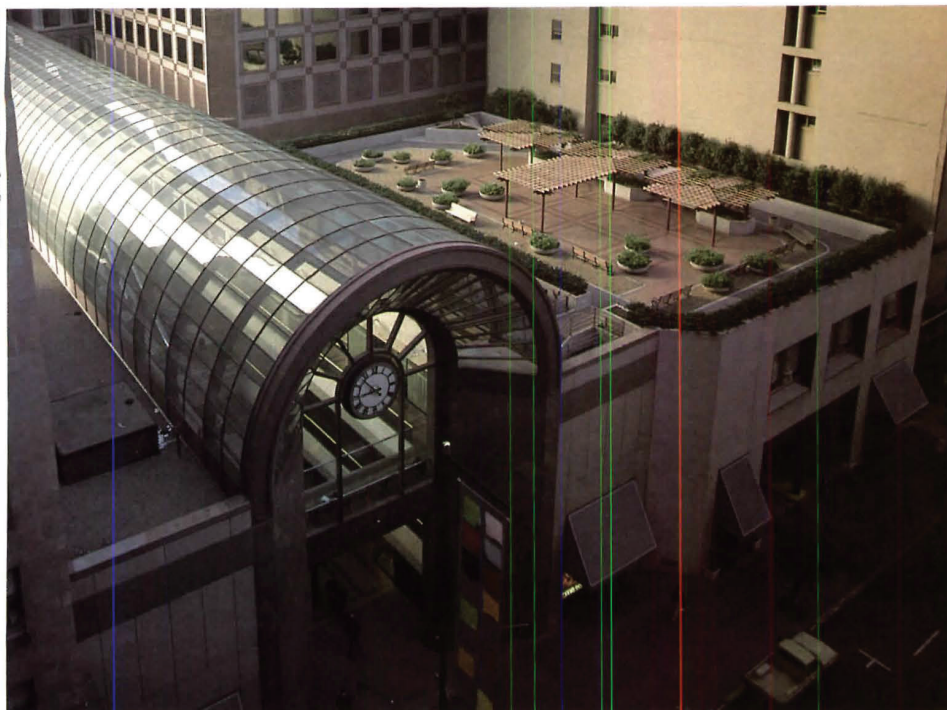


5 minutes. Many searched for a seat, could find none, and instead leaned against the glass walls for support or sat awkwardly on the planters, which were not designed for sitting. Two-thirds of our sample liked the lobby, mainly because of its light and airy quality and its shape. Among their comments, "I think the architect did a fantastic job—very free-looking and fun," "the glass is wonderful," "strikingly elegant," "beautiful and unusual," "eye-catching," and "an extension of the street life outside brought inside."

One person's favorite aspect of the lobby was the "ability to view the weather outside." Said another, "It's a great space, an extension of the street life outside brought inside."

Most disliked features were the lobby's lack of seating and its "cold" quality, i.e., not the "warm greenhouse" the architects intended. "Lack of decor and granite reminds me of an Egyptian tomb," said one person. Another commented, "It resembles a mausoleum." Others called it "austere" and "barren." When asked why they thought the architect had designed the lobby the way he did, one respondent commented "He confused grandeur with grandiosity. He must think there's something wonderful about dwarfing the human body." Another said, "pure aesthetics, little function." Others commented more favorably: "beauty, air, and light in a city becoming crowded and dark"; "the entire building seems designed to provide a spacious feeling and openness as opposed to the very cramped and closed feeling one gets from most skyscrapers."





The Galleria at Crocker Center by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's San Francisco office has become a major retail hub linking the city's shopping and financial districts. The center houses over 60 shops, services, and restaurants, most in the voluminous, vaulted Galleria that runs the width of a block behind the 38-story tower that is home of Crocker National Bank's Northern California headquarters. The Galleria is linked to the tower at several levels and opens onto a roof garden.

Our research at the Galleria revealed that overall its design was extremely successful. It was highly used, and people were very satisfied with it. Over a quarter of those interviewed visit the Galleria every day. Most come to shop, browse, or eat lunch. However, portions of it, especially the roof terrace, were hard to find and virtually void of humanity during most of the day. In fact, over half our respondents were not even aware that the roof garden existed.

Although the Galleria is marketed as having a uniquely European character, influenced by the famous Galleria Vittorio Emmanuelle in Milan, most of those interviewed did not believe it had a European feel. Most shop owners and managers surveyed were pleased with the Galleria's design but wanted to see an improved directory system, more eateries.

Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall by SOM faced the challenge of complementing the existing neoclassical buildings of the San Francisco Civic Center—especially the 1932 Opera House and in Arthur Brown's much-admired 1916 City Hall. So our focus was on the building's success in accommodating to this demanding context.

Our study found that almost all passersby like the building. Two-thirds felt it fit well into its surroundings, mainly because of its color, size, and shape. "It's not a sore thumb," said one person. "It's not the same style, but it doesn't stand out," said another.

Yet another remarked, "Considering the age of the surrounding buildings, Davies seems to harmonize rather well." They were most highly impressed by the generous amounts of glass on the building facade. As one respondent put it, "The lighting at night and the glass allow you to see so much."

When asked what they liked least, the common answer was the projecting exterior balconies on the third level, although these were mentioned by only a few. Among the more bizarre images evoked by the balconies were "Mickey Mouse ears," "flying saucer fins," and "large protrusions—like corns on a toe." It also seemed that respondents over age 40 are more favorable about the building than their younger counterparts. The building has a strong identity. When we asked passersby a few blocks away for directions to the building, almost all knew where it was. Two-thirds of them used their hands to describe the building's curving form.

How do professional architectural critics compare with the public in reacting to these projects? In some cases they concur, in others they differ. For instance, critics scoffed at Pier 39, describing it with disdain. San Francisco *Chronicle's* architecture critic, Allan Temko, called it "corn, kitch, schlock, honky-tonk, dreck, schmaltz, merde . . . pseudo-Victorian junk, childish excrement . . . San Francisco Port's architectural disaster." And

Above left, the Crocker Galleria is flanked by a small roof garden (Crocker tower is at top left in photo). Above, the soaring, vaulted space of the Galleria. Across page clockwise, one of Davies Hall's 'ears'; the hall behind the old Opera House; the hall's curved corner facade.

yet most people interviewed seemed quite enamored with it.

While Temko's overall review of the new Levi Strauss complex was positive, his opinion of the open space was mixed. He criticized the main fountain in the west plaza, citing the use of "such idiosyncrasies as deliberately imperfect piece of granite that look like quarryman's errors." He also spoke derogatorily of "paving circular rosette medallions that seem to have been traced from a Hallmark greeting card." No one in our study even noticed these details.

Have these contributions to San Francisco architecture been for the better or for the worse? It seems that from the public's viewpoint, for the most part, they have been positive. They have offered people some amenities—access to the waterfront, open space, and sunlight in an increasingly crowded downtown, an opportunity to live and work and be entertained virtually within the same block—which were otherwise missing. They have broadened the tax base of the city and employed more residents than before. They have helped attract residents and workers to stay in the city, even after hours and on weekends.

In a general sense, these projects have increased the appeal of city living, something that planners and architects across the U.S. have long been trying to encourage, with irregular success. □



Market Street plaza urged

Task force seeks 'grand civic space' at Ferry Building

By Gerald D. Adams
EXAMINER URBAN PLANNING WRITER

The vast space that the Embarcadero Freeway's demolition has created in front of the Ferry Building should be reserved more for pedestrians than drivers, an influential citizens task force has concluded after six months of deliberations.

The controversial decision conflicts with proposals for a high-speed, less-costly surface road along the waterfront.

Robert Friese, chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Embarcadero Project, acknowledged Monday that the report's conclusion made a submerged roadway more likely than a ground-level arterial in the three-block-long space at the foot of Market Street.

Interviewed at a groundbreak-

Doomsday Clock hands to be moved

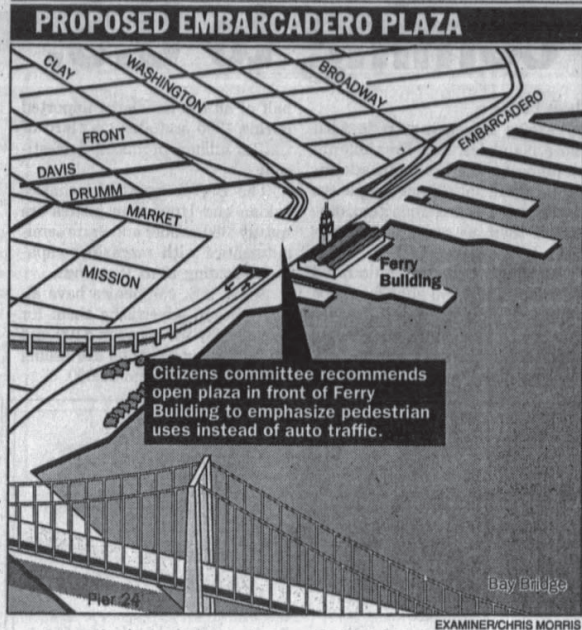
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — The keepers of the Doomsday Clock are moving back its hands to reflect the decreased threat of global nuclear war, but they won't say how much.

The new setting will appear in the December issue of *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. The clock face appears on the cover each issue and reflects the editors' judgment of how far away the world is from nuclear destruction.

The clock has stood at 11:50 p.m. since March 1990, when it was moved back from 11:54 p.m. to reflect Eastern Europe's revolutionary changes and Mikhail Gorbachev's reformist policies.

During the publication's 46-year history, the clock came closest to nuclear midnight — 11:58 p.m. — in 1953, after the United States tested the hydrogen bomb.



EXAMINER/CHRIS MORRIS

ing ceremony for an Embarcadero Boulevard and transit way project that will cost more than \$400 million, Friese said the conclusion was not unanimous, but that a majority of the committee's 400 members agreed the three-acre space at the foot of Market Street should be reserved for "a major pedestrian plaza."

"There is a lot more sentiment for protection of easy pedestrian access to the waterfront than in favor of a surface roadway — unless financial considerations dictate another alternative," Friese added.

Biggest challenge

He described the decision, which confronts the conflict between urban design and smooth traffic flow, as the committee's "biggest single challenge."

"It is difficult to get both those together when you also have to provide (space for) a streetcar line running north and a Muni Metro line running south," Friese said.

Bolstering its cars-versus-people conclusion, the committee's interim report also comes out in favor of:

► "A grand civic space" at the foot of Market Street. Comparable to Civic Center Plaza in importance, it would be crossed by a historic streetcar line leading to Fisherman's Wharf.

► Primary use of the "central plaza" as "the hub for a variety of transportation modes," including ferry boats, pedestrian traffic, bicycles, buses, streetcars, subways "and possibly cable cars," but not private automobiles.

Friese said the report followed six months of open-session deliberations by the committee, which he described as "as broadly based as I've ever seen in this city." It included representatives from environmental, charitable and neighborhood organizations, the business community, professions and city government.

Various plans studied

In biweekly sessions of committees and monthly meetings of the entire body, the group has reviewed schemes that variously call for fronting the Ferry Building with a surface roadway, an elevated roadway, surface lanes for southbound traffic, a tunneled roadway and a sunken roadway, as well as a variety of densities for waterfront development.

The committee's conclusions, which conform with an earlier proposal by Mayor Agnos, will be forwarded to the Roma architectural firm, whose partner Boris Dramov has been selected to prepare a \$250,000 urban design plan.

Roma also is expected to provide cost estimates for the most controversial segment of the freeway's replacement, a 39-acre stretch between Broadway at the north and Folsom Street at the south.

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

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EXAMINER PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA KOCI HERMANDEZ

Embarcadero's face-lift project nearly complete

Harry Bridges Plaza in front of the Ferry Building to open in late February; new Muni line to follow

By Gerald Adams
ART BY THE EXAMINER

Despite that builders' bugaboo — predictions of winter rains that always hang up outdoor construction — the project engineer overseeing transformation of the mid-Embarcadero into Harry Bridges Plaza still promises it'll be finished by the long-promoted windup date of late February.

Well, almost finished.

A key feature, the Muni streetcar line that's supposed to transport passengers to Fisherman's Wharf, is tentatively scheduled to start service in early March, Municipal Railway Project Manager Don Chee cautiously allowed.

And Department of Public Works spokesman Alex Mamak last week hinted there will be "minor modifications beyond this date."

Construction of the elaborately landscaped Harry Bridges Plaza has been forcing pedestrians and cars alike to traverse often-muddy, swerving detours during the past two years.

Like a confectioner adorning a wedding cake, the Public Works Department last week erected two major art works as centerpieces of the \$60 million Mid-Embarcadero plaza project. Twin towers called Millennium Lights, for the beams they can shoot 600 feet into the sky on special occasions, were put in place by giant cranes. They create six-story-high landmarks fronting an official landmark, the century-old Ferry Building.

San Francisco Bay
Ferry Building
Washington
Clay
California
Butter
Market
Mission
Polk
San Francisco
Area of detail
Marina Center
San Francisco
EXAMINER GRAPHICS
11/29/99

Snapping pictures of workers as they grabbed sections of each pillar was their excited co-designer, urban designer Boris Dramov, whose firm, Roma, was the principal architect of the open space that stretches from Washington Street down to Folsom Street.

"This is going to be a great public space," exulted Dramov, visibly animated by the sight of his project at last assuming a recognizable shape.

After years of seeing the now-demolished Embarcadero Freeway separate San Franciscans from the waterfront, Dramov said he is excited to see Market Street, the main thoroughfare, being reconnected to the waterfront.

Still, there is work to be done. Although the Millennium Lights pillars are in place, three more weeks of electrical work remain, according to Bernard Tse, Department of Public Works engineer. Some 20,000 granite pavers for the 80,000-square-foot (over an acre) open space that separates the roadways remain to be installed, as do blue stanchions to support Muni streetcar electrical wires.

Last week, workers were still planting some of the approximately 150 sycamore trees that line the area's sidewalks. Already in place are 110 Canary Island palm trees with the fronds still tied up with

hemp. "Fresh new sprouts will eventually break the ties," Dramov predicted, allowing the trees to assume their natural umbrella shape.

Dramov expects the plaza to be a major civic gathering place closed to traffic at appropriate times. "I want to create a nighttime environment," as well, he said, noting that in addition to the plaza's many street lights, "The palms will have lights in their nests."

Although there are no benches or chairs in sight, Dramov said the space already provides seating. To illustrate, he sat on a rim of a 4-foot-high concrete wall, one of some two dozen that surround palm trees on a raised section bordering the adjacent M. Justin Herman Plaza.

Those circular walls, it should be pointed out, also hide the unattractive backsides of the Vaillancourt Fountain, the tentacle-like waterworks originally designed to hide the now-demolished Embarcadero Freeway.

Cost of the milelong Harry Bridges Plaza has been estimated at about \$60 million. That sum includes the planting of 254 trees, of which 110 were already grown, 20- to 25-year-old palms, each costing about \$6,000. Each of the two Millennium Lights towers is estimated to cost about \$700,000.

The money was raised through a locally voted half-cent sales tax initiative.

Related future projects for the area include the construction of new ferryboat terminals, remodeling of the Ferry Building and of the adjacent Pier 1 to the north of the Ferry Building.

Pedestrians make their way across the construction site that soon will be Harry Bridges Plaza, across the Embarcadero from the Ferry Building, above. At left, Muni tracks under construction that will take passengers to Fisherman's Wharf run between rows of Canary Island palm trees.

Ex-DA Arlo Smith endorses Hallinan for the second time

Fazio calls it act of vengeance from ex-boss who fired him

By Peter Hartlaub
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

District Attorney Terence Hallinan has received the endorsement of his predecessor, Arlo Smith, who says the current DA has done a fine job of carrying over and expanding on his diversion programs.

Smith, who was district attorney from 1980 to 1995, ran against Hallinan and current candidate Bill Fazio four years ago but was eliminated for the runoff.

Smith announced his endorsement at the Golden Dragon Restaurant in Chinatown on Monday.

Sheriff Michael Hennessey, who has already announced his support of Hallinan, attended the event.

Smith said his choice was easy.

"I think that on literally every front over the last four years, Terence has done a very, very outstanding job," Smith said, citing a 40 percent drop in violent crime in The City as evidence.

Smith developed several of the diversion programs that Hallinan considers the cornerstone of his administration.

"He's kept those going and I think added to some of them in a positive way," Smith said, pointing out Hallinan's work in expanding the family violence unit.

Fazio, whom Smith fired when he announced his candidacy in 1995, said the endorsement is just one more act of vengeance from his former boss.

"He's so bitter that it makes me pucker," Fazio said. "(Smith) and Hallinan are bedfellows in the sense that they both had the worst conviction rate in the state of California."

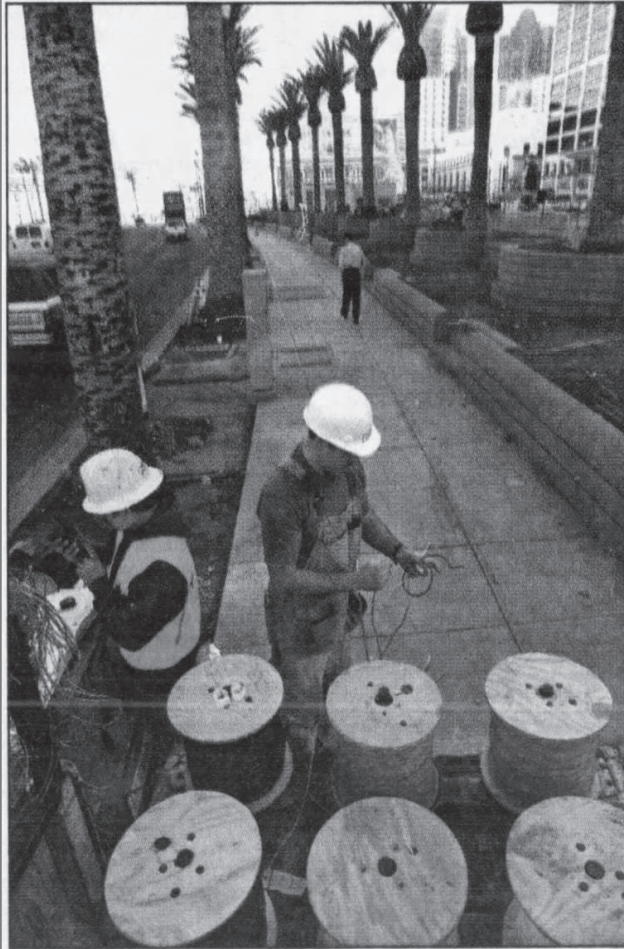
Smith also endorsed Hallinan for the 1995 runoff.

Fazio said Smith and The City, claiming he was fired for political reasons. As part of a settlement Fazio received a statement from Smith last year, which said, in part, "I wish Bill Fazio the best in his future endeavors."

Smith, who worked with Fazio for 15 years, now says he thinks very little of the prosecutor.

"I simply lack trust and confidence in him," Smith said. "I don't just think (Hallinan) will make a better DA, I think he's a better human being."

NOT YET Y2K READY



EXAMINER/PENNI GLADSTONE

Electricians Herasto Hernandez, left, and Bart Murray wire traffic signals along tree-lined Harry Bridges Plaza along the Embarcadero waterfront.

S.F. races to prepare waterfront party site

By Gerald D. Adams
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

Although some 200,000 people are expected to throng the new plaza in front of the Ferry Building on New Year's Eve for music, dancing and fireworks, there's a hang-up.

Maybe it's only a slight one, but if you're heading to the party along the Embarcadero, be prepared: With only six work days left, con-

struction crews have not quite finished the \$50 million Harry Bridges Plaza on the Embarcadero — planned site of the waterfront bash.

To be candid, as of Tuesday the place was a mess.

A steam shovel was digging up mud. On the dancing-floor-to-be were sizable puddles. Some surfaces were still dirt. Massive construction equipment lined the site.

[See NEW YEAR'S, A-18]

♦ NEW YEAR'S from A-1

Embarcadero job a race against time

And some 3,000 granite tiles, eventually destined to pave the plaza floor, were lying in stacks, awaiting installation.

As to how this space can become a party pad large enough to hold a fourth of The City's population a little more than a week hence, even workers are dubious.

Bernard Tse, who supervises the Harry Bridges Plaza construction project for the Department of Public Works, admitted he's "just hoping for the best."

"If everything goes absolutely crazy here, it can do a lot of damage," said Tse, who aims to complete the entire six-block-wide Mid-Embarcadero project by February.

To prevent things from going crazy, construction equipment is to be moved a half-mile south to Pier 32, a large empty space, by New Year's Eve, he said.

At the Ferry Building, "We don't want anything there that people can climb on or jump off," Tse said.

And some portions of the party area will have to be fenced for security, he noted.

Bob Barsotti, executive producer of Bill Graham Presents, is running the waterfront extravaganza, as well as two other New Year's Eve/New Millennium celebrations, at Civic Center and at Union Square.

Fences and fears notwithstanding, Barsotti believes revelers at the Embarcadero will find plenty of space to party. He acknowl-



edges, however, that the waterfront gala will be taking place in part of the plaza that's not completely finished.

To provide space, crowds can gather and dance on the street because — although the Department of Parking and Traffic cautions that its information is only approximate at this date — it is warning motorists that all north- and southbound Embarcadero traffic will be either "encouraged" to detour or outright banned from about 10 p.m. until 4 a.m. The Embarcadero will be restricted between either Broadway and Harrison Street or possibly a longer stretch between Battery and Harrison streets, depending on the size of the crowd.

Because construction is still under way on two towers on the new plaza — some are calling them the

Millennium Lights; some the Light Cannons — those six-story-high monuments will be off-limits.

Barsotti urges revelers to stay on the west side of the plaza and Embarcadero. He warned that much of the Embarcadero on the Bay side will be cordoned off.

There were still areas of dirt Tuesday, but Tse predicts that by New Year's Eve, almost all such spaces will have been paved. And where excavation was still under way, trees are to be planted before Dec. 31.

Dismissing fears that a raucous reveler might harm a newly planted sapling, Tse said, "One tree is cheaper than having someone fall or injure themselves."

Apparently it will be impossible to put in place the thousands of granite tiles still intended to pave the new plaza in time for the event.

Y2K PARTY PLANS

Have you got special plans for New Year's Eve? Traveling to some exotic place? Partying with hundreds of thousands on the streets of San Francisco, or with thousands on the streets of your town, or with a special person in your own home?

What about Y2K concerns? Are you making any special provisions because of worries that computer failures could disrupt everyday life?

Tell us about your plans for this special start of the new year. We'll print the best entries as First Person articles.

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"It looks like we're going to be moving a lot of it (the granite) out of the way," Tse said.

The party outside the Ferry Building, which Barsotti said is free to the public, is scheduled to begin at 10 p.m. New Year's Eve and last until 2 a.m.

The entertainment will include historic images of San Francisco to be shown on giant video screens placed alongside the Ferry Building. Laser lights, shining from atop the new Millennium Lights towers, are to provide a light show. DJs are to provide dance music, and at midnight there will be a 15-minute-long fireworks show.

All this plus, Barsotti added, "a little bit of a surprise element."

Embarcadero plaza loses name of Justin Herman

By Dominic Fracassa

San Francisco's Recreation and Park Commission voted 4-2 Thursday to strip Justin Herman's name from the plaza on the Embarcadero that's borne the name of the controversial and once-powerful bureaucrat for more than four decades.

It's the second time in less than a month that the commission has voted on the issue in response to growing criticism of Herman's contentious legacy and calls to rededicate the plaza to a less divisive public figure.

An unusual clerical error at the commission's Oct. 19 meeting forced the second vote. Before

Plaza continues on A10

Divisive S.F. figure Herman's name off Embarcadero plaza

Plaza from page A1

departing the commission's October meeting early for another engagement, Commissioner Eric McDonnell stated his clear support for renaming the plaza, but he left before a roll-call vote was taken.

The commission's secretary improperly counted him as voting in favor of changing the plaza's name, however, as instructed by commission President Mark Buell. Without McDonnell's vote, there was actually a 3-3 tie, meaning no action could be taken. Buell apologized for the "confusion around the vote."

Herman served as the influential executive director of the city's Redevelopment Agency from 1959 until he died in 1971. The plaza was dedicated in his honor in 1972.

Herman's vexed history in the city traces back to him spearheading the razing of 60 square blocks of the Western Addition in the 1960s in the name of urban renewal. The program had particularly dire consequences for that neighborhood's African American and Japanese American communities — thousands were displaced as their homes and businesses were leveled.

Board of Supervisors President London Breed, who grew up in the Western Addition and has been a vocal proponent of removing Herman's name from the plaza, said she was glad the commission "got



Bob Campbell / The Chronicle 1966

Justin Herman oversaw the razing of a large swath of the Western Addition in the '60s.

» **School to be rechristened:** Berkeley board votes to remove slave owner LeConte's name. **DI**

it right this time around." Until a new name is chosen for the space, which could take months, it will be known as Embarcadero Plaza.

Buell and Commissioner Gloria Bonilla voted for a second time against changing the plaza's name. Buell, who worked with Herman in the late 1960s and 1970, has said that Herman was being unfairly "demonized" for a set of admittedly misguided policies for which he was not alone responsible. Bonilla said she found Buell's arguments persuasive and that she didn't believe the commission had "deliberated sufficiently on this matter."

Commissioner Kat Anderson voted against changing the plaza's name in October, but switched her vote Thursday. She said that she had

pervisor Chris Daly proposed removing Herman's name from the space, but the issue did not come to a vote. In 2015, a citizens' campaign to rename the space after poet Maya Angelou failed to gain traction.

Also Thursday, the commission approved \$8.9 million in upgrades for McLaren Park, the city's second-largest patch of open space. The funds will be used to build a restroom and multiuse courtyard and for improvements to the Jerry Garcia Amphitheatre, among other upgrades. A plan to spend \$2 million to close some of the park's trails and widen others to accommodate cyclists was met with strong opposition from some of McLaren's most strident supporters.

The park department said the trails need improvements to accommodate more users and to protect the park's natural habitats. Critics are concerned that any tampering with the trails would diminish the park's untamed character. An unofficial online petition opposing the park department's plans for the trails has gathered more than 900 signatures.

Exactly which trails would be closed or widened has yet to be determined by park department staff, which will return to the commission at a later date with more detailed plans.

"This is a park in our system that has long been neglected. It's unfortunate that it's taken so long to get here," McDonnell said.

Dominic Fracassa is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: dfracassa@sfchronicle.com Twitter: @dominicfracassa



Gabrielle Lurie / The Chronicle

Justin Herman Plaza (bottom half of photo) will be called Embarcadero Plaza for now after Herman's name was removed.

supported renaming the plaza but opposed the placholder name of Embarcadero Plaza, calling it "generic" and selected without input from the public. Commissioners Allan Low and Tom Harrison also voted to remove Herman's name. Commissioner Larry Mazzola was absent.

Efforts to rechristen the plaza have waxed and waned for years. In 2001, then-Su-



Jared Soares

LONGFORM

The public spaces that shaped skateboarding

Skateboarding has made it to the Olympics, but it still owes a debt to American architecture

By **Willy Blackmore** | Jun 5, 2019, 8:00am EDT

LONGFORM

Deep dives on cities, architecture, design, real estate, and urban planning.

The first time James Kelch went to skate at San Francisco's Justin Herman Plaza, near the intersections of Embarcadero and Market Street, he

was the only one there with a board. It was the late 1980s, and "it wasn't a real skate place yet," Kelch says. "I just showed up and it was around lunchtime, and it was just business people eating lunch." He clattered around the brick

plaza for a while, his first of many, many skate sessions at the spot that would become known to locals, and later to the entire skateboarding world, as EMB.

At the time, skaters were often the only people there, except during lunch, when office workers would descend from the surrounding high-rises to sit on the concrete blocks scattered around the modernist plaza. But even as more people began to skate there, the tricks remained stuck in the ramp-centric style that dominated the 1980s. “There was a wave there, like a concrete wave,” says Kelch, who is still known as the Mayor of Embarcadero, “and we would just push up it and do a little handplant,” a sort of one-handed handstand where the skater holds the inverted board to their feet. “Even when it started getting crowded, people would bring a jump ramp down and park it right in the middle of the bricks.”

The ramp wasn’t a fixture for long. Over the next few years, the fast, fluid, and highly technical style of street skating that defined skateboarding in the 1990s was developed in part at EMB. Handplants and wallrides were a thing of the past once skaters like Bay Area local Mike Carroll began doing tricks like [kickflip late shove-its](#)—flipping the board over lengthwise and then popping it around 180 degrees before landing—at EMB. That kind of “flippity high-tech shit,” as Kelch puts it, was on full display in Plan B’s *Questionable* video, released in 1992, which prominently featured EMB and the style of skating that was developing there. The plaza “has everything you need: you can jump stairs, you can ride the wave, jump gaps, skate the blocks,” Kelch says. If he built a skate park right now, “it would be Embarcadero.”

When skateboarding debuts at the Tokyo Olympics next summer, some three decades after the first polyurethane wheels hit the bricks at EMB, it will have completed the long, improbable trip from criminal act to social and institutional acceptance. But even as an Olympic sport, skateboarding will remain a direct physical response to the varied terrain of American public architecture.

After decades of false starts in skatepark development and design, municipalities across the country have spent the past decade and a half

building concrete skate plazas that are deeply influenced by spots like EMB. Rather than continue to build parks comprising wooden and metal ramps, skatepark architects took a new approach: “Let’s recreate urban architecture, let’s recreate these urban plazas and make our skate parks look like what we skate out in the real world,” says Vince Onel, vice president of skatepark development for Spohn Ranch, which has designed and built parks around the country.

The name of the Tokyo skatepark designer has yet to be released, but the course, which will begin construction next month, will likely follow in that tradition. And if there’s a ledge down a set of stairs at the Olympic park—a common skate plaza feature—it will almost certainly be referred to by on-air commentators as a hubba. That name derives from Hubba Hideout, the six-step staircase with concrete ledges running down both sides that was set just off of EMB, a secluded enough place that people used to smoke crack—or hubba, in Bay Area slang—back there.

A proving ground, a cultural hub, an ideas lab for new trends and new tricks: EMB is “intrinsically tied to the progression of skateboarding,” says director Jacob Rosenberg, who got his start filming Plan B videos like *Questionable* at the plaza. Locals went pro, other pros came to skate alongside locals, and skater kids from all over the world made pilgrimages to Embarcadero. Every skater in the 1990s who ever bought lifesaver-sized wheels, wore wildly baggy cut-off jeans, or took a razor to a pair of high-top skate shoes like Vans Cabs or Airwalk Enigmas, cutting them down to free up their ankles, was picking up on a trend that emanated from EMB.



Skateboarder outside Embarcadero Center. | Jonathan Sprague/Redux

Embarcadero is also emblematic of the confluence of politics, urban planning, and landscape architecture that has created many of the most famous street skating spots—thereby establishing the design vernacular for contemporary skate plazas. “So many of the spaces are redevelopment spots,” says Ocean Howell, including the famed Love Park in Philadelphia. A former professional skateboarder for Birdhouse in the ’90s, Howell went on to study architecture as a grad student at UC Berkeley, and is now a professor of architectural history at the University of Oregon. “They were funded through Title 1 of the 1949 Housing Act. They were literally slum removal projects.”

Passed in the wake of World War II, ostensibly to fund new low-income housing and slake the demand for housing for returning vets, the Housing Act left an infamous legacy in American cities. The federal government promised \$2 for every dollar spent locally on so-called urban renewal, allowing cities to carve out old, lower-income, and often nonwhite neighborhoods in their urban cores and replace them with office buildings, retail centers, and public plazas. Over 400,000 units across the country were cleared with funding from Title 1 of the Housing Act between 1949 and 1966, with 300,000 families—more than half of them nonwhite—forced to relocate. While new public housing projects were built with funding from the Housing Act, the bill ultimately razed more units than it created. Plazas and other public spaces built as part of Title 1 projects so reliably resulted in good spots to skate that Howell would often look up where the funding was used when he traveled to a new city. “I can’t think of an example that was not good to skate,” he says.

In San Francisco, it was EMB’s namesake, Justin Herman, who ran the redevelopment agency, which was an early adopter of “slum clearance.” Plans to raze a 36-block area in the predominantly black Fillmore neighborhood were finalized in 1947, two years before the Housing Act passed. Later, Herman’s agency took full advantage of the additional federal resources Title 1 made available. As *Business Week* reported in 1969, Herman lined up \$192 million in federal grants to fund the city’s billion-dollar redevelopment plan, “which put San Francisco among the top 10 cities in volume of money flowing from Washington and head and shoulders above the country’s 900 active redevelopment agencies.” (Philadelphia and New York City ultimately received the most funding under Title 1.)

Herman himself said “critics will rightly condemn urban renewal as a land-grab for the rich and a heartless push-out for the poor and nonwhites” if redevelopment did not include enough new low-income housing to house people who were forcibly displaced. But those units never materialized, making Herman a controversial, Robert Moses-like figure in the Bay Area. As journalist Thomas Fleming wrote in the *Sun-Reporter*, a local African-American newspaper, in 1965, Herman was the “arch-villain in the black depopulation of the city.” The city’s African-American population was 13 percent in 1970, and has dropped to just 6 percent today—one of the smallest black populations among major American cities. In 2017, the San Francisco board of supervisors voted unanimously to strip Herman’s name from the plaza.

As Justin Herman Plaza, it was never more than a corporate picnic ground. But as EMB, it became a place for participation.

Plans for EMB itself were the result of a 1962 report from the San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association called “What To Do About Market Street?” which considered how to remake the city’s main thoroughfare and rid it of its “shabby atmosphere.” Unlike Fillmore, where “slum removal” involved tearing down countless Victorian houses and apartment buildings, the corner of Market and Embarcadero had long been home to a sprawling wholesale produce market, and the vendors weren’t exactly up in arms about being moved to a newer, more conveniently located facility.

Designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, who was also responsible for San Francisco’s Ghirardelli Square, EMB “is one of very few successful Modernist urban piazzas in the United States,” according to the Cultural Landscape Foundation, which has pushed for its preservation. As he was planning the plaza, Halprin wrote in a notebook that it would represent a “total environment in which all the elements working together create a place for participation.”

While its scale allowed Embarcadero to play host to some mass gatherings, including a U2 concert and Joe Montana's retirement announcement in 1995, the plaza never exactly clicked as a public place. "It was kind of a void," says John King, the urban design critic for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. But if that was a failure of the design, or of its context within the city, it contributed to its success as a place to skate.

"What made Justin Herman Plaza attractive to skateboarders and work for skateboarders was its inappropriateness to the traditional city scale and function," King says. "You had all these planners and architects in the 1950s and '60s saying cities need these grand, celebratory spaces—and they really didn't." But apparently skaters did.

EMB's importance as a skate spot should be seen as part of its architectural legacy, King says, "because the glory of built design—whether it's architecture or landscape architecture or enacted urban design at a physical scale—is that the most important part of its life begins when the project is completed." As Justin Herman Plaza, it was never more than a corporate picnic ground. But as EMB, it became a place for participation—just not in any way Halprin would have imagined. As Philadelphia skateboarder Ricky Oyola said about Love Park in a 2004 documentary called *Love Story*, "We made this place, we made this place alive."

There were always security guards at EMB, and cops too; for a time, an empty police car remained parked outside of the Hyatt Regency on one side of the plaza. There would sometimes be 200 skaters there, a mix of pros, local heroes looking to get sponsored, and pilgrimage-making skaters from all over. As one former Bay Area skater said, if you dropped a bomb on EMB during its heyday, professional skateboarding would have ceased to exist.



Jake Rosenberg

While there had always been the possibility of being busted, it became more than just a possibility as the scene grew. “If they chose to bust you, they would bust you,” Rosenberg says, “and getting into the mid-’90s it was a bust all of the time.” Eventually, it was harder and harder to do any actual skating at EMB. When anyone put a board down and started to pump, a cop would be there to hand out a ticket. Various metal clips and knobs were installed in the early 2000s to make it near-impossible to skate any of the ledges and blocks. In 2011, long after the scene had moved on, Hubba Hideout was demolished altogether.

The same thing happened at plazas and schools and other public places around the country, as municipalities tried to shut down street skating altogether. But at the same time, city planners began to embrace the skatepark as an intentional element of development. In 2003, there were less than 1,000 skateparks across the country; today, there are more than 3,000 parks nationwide, many of which are public. More than 90 percent of Spohn Ranch’s clients are city governments, and nonprofits like the Tony

Hawk Foundation and Skateboarders for Public Parks have provided both advocacy and grant-based funding to support the building of municipal parks across the country. Portland, Oregon's Parks and Recreation department went so far as to develop [a master plan for skateparks](#), which will eventually see 19 skateparks built across the city. For anyone who grew up in an era of skateboarding that invariably involved getting chased by cops, getting skateboards impounded, and being treated like criminals, it's an almost improbable shift.

"I trip out on it every day, that this is an actual job and a profession, and that municipalities are taking this seriously," says Onel of Spohn Ranch. "I'm sitting in this room, I'm a skateboarder, and there's 10, 15 city officials who want to hear what I have to say."

"Skateboarding is now an interest group that holds some real sway," says Howell, noting that such an idea would not only have been unimaginable 25 years ago, "but we would have resisted it back in the day." It's power that the skating community should use responsibly, he says, because just as urban planners paved over "slums" with huge plazas in the 20th century, today's developers have realized that having a bunch of skater kids around is preferable to the presence of other "undesirable" marginalized communities.

"They site skateparks in such a way as to displace open-air drug markets, homeless encampments," Howell says. "They use it in a very deliberate way." Knowing this, skateboarders should push back, according to Howell, when a park's intention is to displace others, or to otherwise be a means of gentrification. Adopting the architectural features of the modernist plaza is one thing, but the structurally racist and classist approach to urban planning that aesthetic served should be left in the past.

While the features of an urban plaza are easy enough to recreate in a skatepark, there are other ineffable qualities that are more difficult to replicate, even if designing a space with the intent that it will be skated can make it easier and perhaps better to skate. "I think the essence of Embarcadero was that it was a hub," Rosenberg says. "The craziest thing about that place is that it's not great for skating. There's bricks and there's holes. It's really a gnarly environment."

“What we’re still trying to capture is the atmosphere of those kinds of places,” Onel says. “That atmosphere and those intangibles of EMB or Love Park, we’re still trying to capture that.” ■

Willy Blackmore is a freelance journalist based in Hope, Maine. He writes about food, culture, and the environment. He was never that good at skateboarding.

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LOCAL

'They fought for this space': SF plans to wipe away cultural landmark for \$30M park

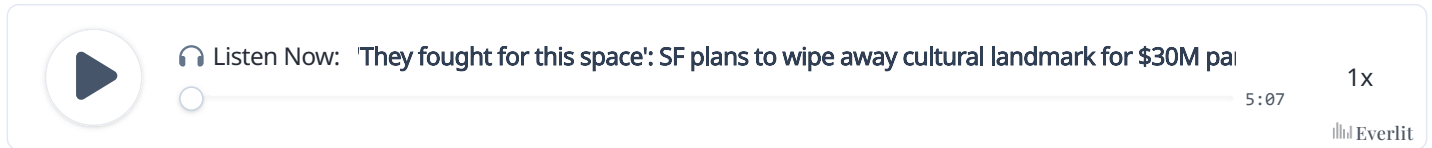
Modern street skateboarding was developed on the red bricks of Embarcadero Plaza



Justin Herman Plaza in San Francisco on May 6, 2013.
Marie Berne via Flickr CC 2.0

By **Lester Black**, *Cannabis editor*
Updated March 14, 2025 11:39 a.m.





San Francisco is moving fast to completely redevelop the Embarcadero Plaza, hoping that a public-private partnership can raise over \$30 million to build a new 5-acre square to attract people back downtown. The project received a warm welcome from most parties — the Board of Supervisors unanimously supported the project earlier this month — but not everyone is happy about the redesign.



Embarcadero Plaza is arguably the most historic street skateboarding location in the world, yet the city has made no commitments to allow skateboarding at the new park or honor its history. That uncertainty has forced skateboarders to demand its inclusion in the city's plans.

"One of the things we need to acknowledge and preserve was that skateboarding is what breathed life into that plaza for a long time, despite it being outlawed and illegal since the mid-1980s," said Ted Barrow, a skateboarding historian who created a petition this week to "Save Embarcadero Plaza."

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Embarcadero, or EMB, as it's often referred to by skateboarders, is widely credited for helping redefine street skateboarding in the early 1990s, with influential video parts and groundbreaking tricks being filmed on its kinked concrete ledges and extra-wide stair gaps. Many of those tricks that were pioneered at EMB are now used by Olympic athletes to win gold medals.



Skateboarders practice in Justin Herman Plaza on June 28, 1988.
John O'Hara/San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images

"Skateboarders, whether they knew it or not, they fought for this space. They risked getting arrested and getting their boards taken," Barrow told SFGATE. "They risked decades of adversity to skate this place, and in many ways, I think they should be acknowledged."

So far, that recognition hasn't happened, even as the Board of Supervisors gave approval earlier this month to a public-private partnership between the city and BXP, the private developer that owns the Embarcadero Center towers, with the goal of redeveloping both the plaza and the adjoining Sue Bierman Park. The city hopes to raise \$15 million to \$20 million of public funds for the new park. BXP expects to raise \$10 million in private funding. BXP released renderings last year that show a grassy redesign of the brutalist plaza with playgrounds that also allows for "destination events such as concerts and large gatherings and public viewings."



BXP did not return an SFGATE request for comment by the time of publication. Tamara Aparton, a spokesperson for the SF Recreation and Park Department, told SFGATE in an email that “we strongly encourage members of the skateboarding community” to engage in the park planning process.

“We are right at the beginning of a robust public outreach process that will shape the design of the plaza,” Aparton said. “... This is the chance for people to weigh in on the kind of features and activities they want to see.”

Embarcadero Plaza’s more than 50-year-old austere design has been derided by some, but for skateboarders, it was the backdrop to the modern development of the sport, largely thanks to a furious period of innovation on the plaza in the early 1990s. For a few years, it seemed like every major skateboarding video part and magazine included at least some footage of skateboarders grinding the park’s iconic ledges and clearing the extra-long stair gaps. Barrow called it “the center of the skateboarding universe” during that time and “our colosseum.” The

tricks were captured on the newly released handheld cameras and then distributed globally, with skateboarders around the world inspired by what they saw as possible in San Francisco.

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EMB and these skateboarders transitioned the sport out of the confines of parking lots and designated skate parks and into cities themselves, making urban skateboarding look like what it is today. The plaza has been immortalized in skateboarding videos and in popular culture. When the video game designers of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater series needed to create their "Streets" level in the first game of the franchise, they used EMB.



A young skateboarder rides in front of the Ferry Building on the Embarcadero in San Francisco.

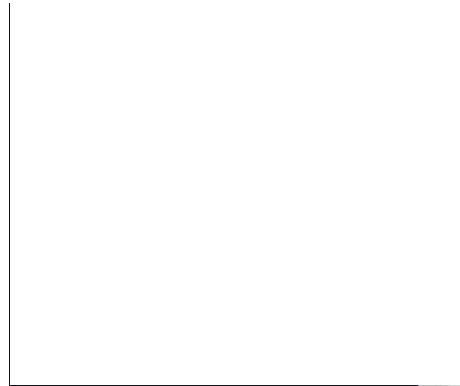
Adam Hester/Getty Images

The plaza is no longer a major hub of skateboarding for San Francisco, as a previous redesign already removed the majority of its skateable features, including many of the iconic steps and ledges that skateboarders had been using for decades. Barrow is not calling on the entire plaza to be preserved in its current state. The online petition, which gathered over 2,000 signatures within a day, called on the city to include skateable design elements in the new park, preserve the perimeter of the Vaillancourt Fountain so it can continue to be skated and develop a way to commemorate the plaza's skating history.

Barrow said it's ironic that San Francisco is planning to wipe away a piece of skateboarding history just as the city government intentionally brings skateboarders into Civic Center to clean up what was formerly one of the roughest parts of town.

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"Let's not just use skateboarding to clear away blighted places. Let's use skateboarding in central places, like what they hope this plaza can be at Embarcadero," Barrow said. "We don't need the whole plaza. Give us some ledges and a plaque that honors the skateboarding history, and let this be a part of the larger mission of this plaza."

This story has been updated.

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March 13, 2025 | Updated March 14, 2025 11:39 a.m.



Lester Black
CANNABIS EDITOR



Lester Black is SFGATE's cannabis editor. He was born in Torrance, raised in Seattle, and has written for FiveThirtyEight.com, High Country News, The Guardian, The Albuquerque Journal, The Tennessean, and many other publications. He was previously the cannabis columnist for The Stranger.

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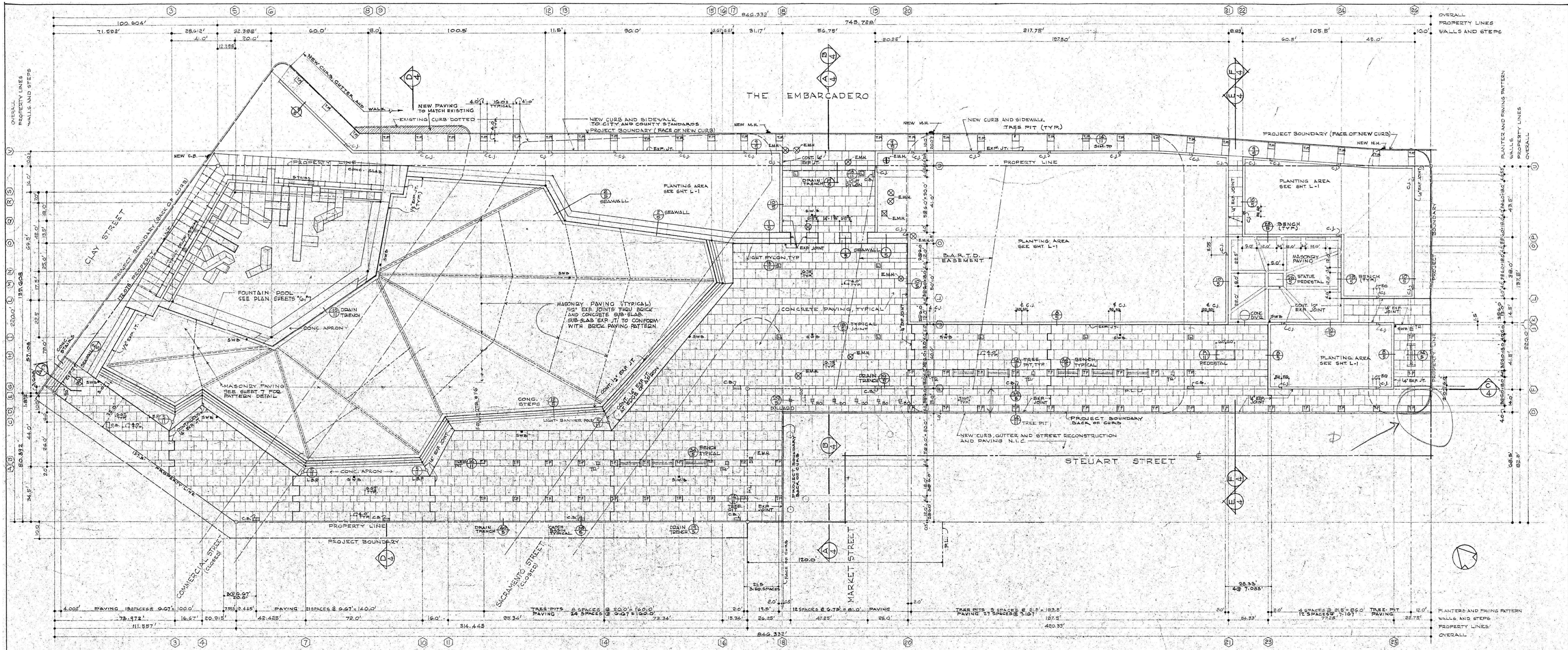
SpellTower

Appendix D – 1969 Lawrence Halprin Drawings

Selected drawings of Embarcadero Plaza, prepared by Lawrence Halprin & Associates in 1969, were reproduced in the 2022 Market Street Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) documentation package. This HALS drawing set was prepared by PGAdesign as part of a mitigation measure for the 2019 Better Market Street EIR, and submitted to the Library of Congress.²⁷

Drawings of Vaillancourt Fountain produced by Lawrence Halprin & Associates are not included in this HRR, but are appended to the Vaillancourt Fountain HRR.

²⁷ "Market Street, Embarcadero Plaza to Octavia Street, San Francisco, San Francisco County, CA: Drawings from Survey HALS CA-164" (2022), on file at HABS/HAER/HALS Collection at the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, accessed March 4, 2025, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.ca4485.sheet?st=gallery>.



NOTE:
FOR WORK INCLUDED BEYOND THE PROJECT BOUNDARY,
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SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS									
A.B. ANCHOR BOLT	EL. ELEVATION	L.B.P. LIGHT BANNER POLE	T.R. TRASH RECEPTACLE	SECTION LETTER	SECTION SYMBOL				
ALT. ALTERNATE	EMH. EXISTING MAN-HOLE	INV. INVERT	V.C.P. VITREOUS CLAY TILE	SHEET NUMBER	DETAIL SYMBOL				
C.B. CATCH BASIN	EXP. EXISTING PAVING SURFACE	N.I.C. NOT IN CONTRACT	T/C TOP OF CURB	DETAIL NUMBER	DETAIL SYMBOL				
C.I. CAST IRON	E.J. EXPANSION JOINT	P.L. PROPERTY LINE	T/W TOP OF WALL	MEASURING POINT					
C.J. CONSTRUCTION JOINT	EQ. EQUAL	S. SLOPE	SWB. STREET WARDEN BOX	CENTER LINE OF SCULPTURE ELEMENT					
C.O.T.G. CLEAN-OUT TO GRADE	GALV. GALVANIZED	S.S. STORM SEWER	NEW FRAME & COVER ON EXH. (RUB. T.O.B.)	NEW CATCH BASIN					
C. CENTER-LINE	G.I. GALVANIZED IRON	O.C. ON CENTER	NEW CATCH BASIN	EXISTING MAN-HOLE					
EA. EACH	L. LIGHT PYLON	T.P. TREE POCKET	NEW STORM SEWER	NEW STORM SEWER					

EMBARCADERO PLAZA

EMBARCADERO LOWER MARKET APPROVED REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA E1

LAYOUT PLAN

SAN FRANCISCO REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN COOPERATION
WITH THE SAN FRANCISCO RECREATION AND PARK DEPARTMENT
AND SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

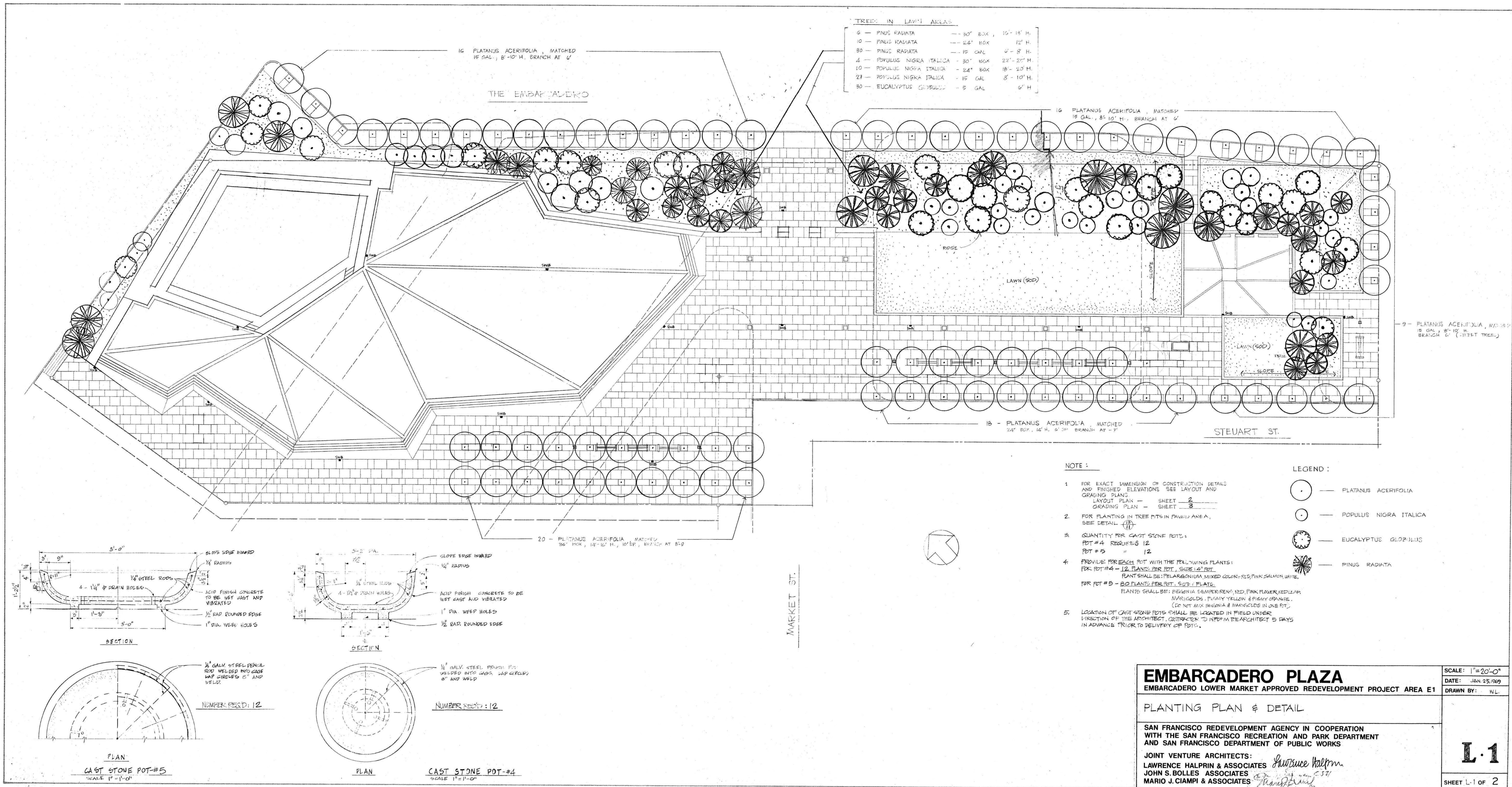
JOINT VENTURE ARCHITECTS:
LAWRENCE HALPRIN & ASSOCIATES
JOHN S. BOLLES ASSOCIATES
MARIO J. CIAMPI & ASSOCIATES

SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"
DATE: JAN 25, 1969
DRAWN BY: W.H. H.N.

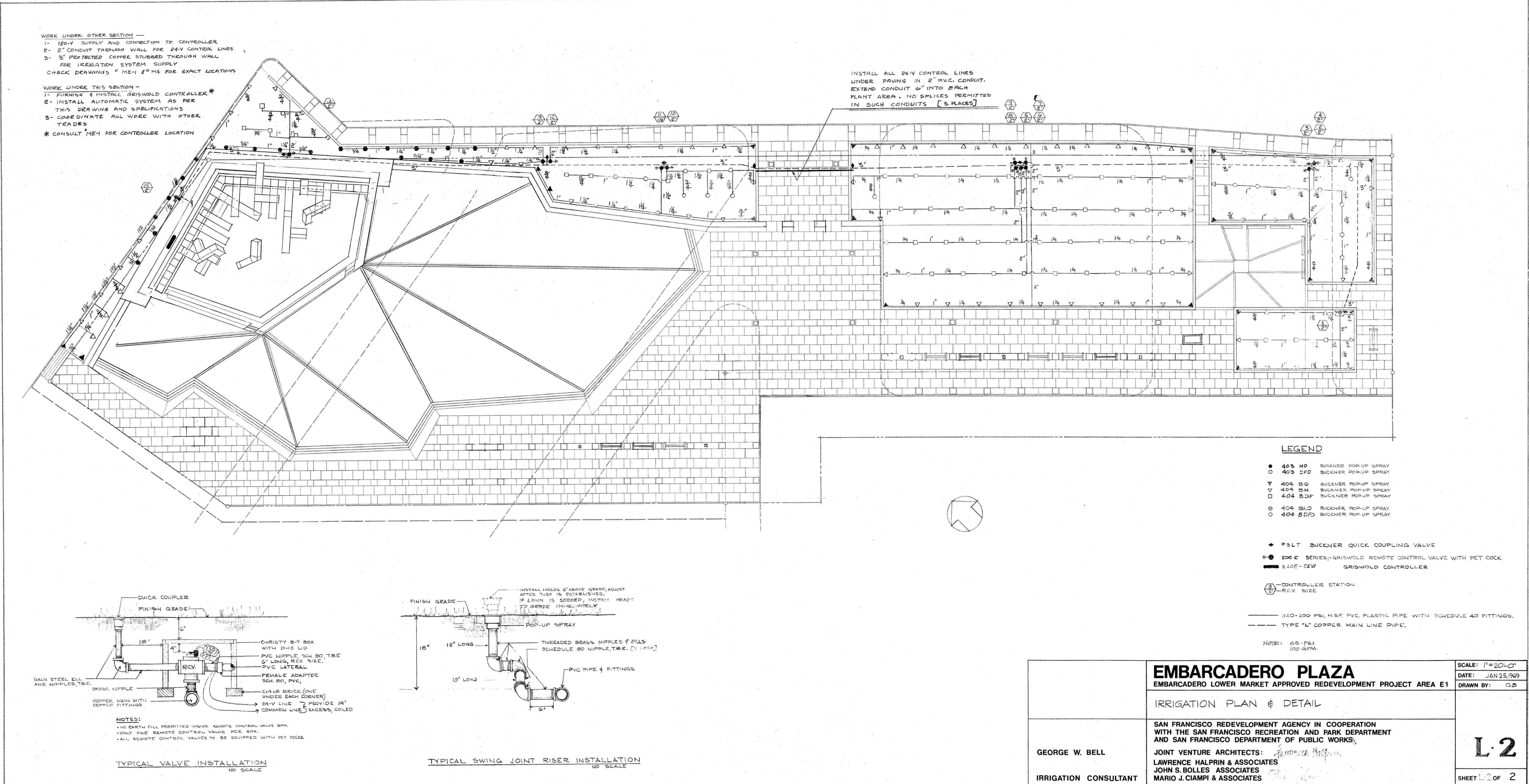
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SHEET 2 OF 12

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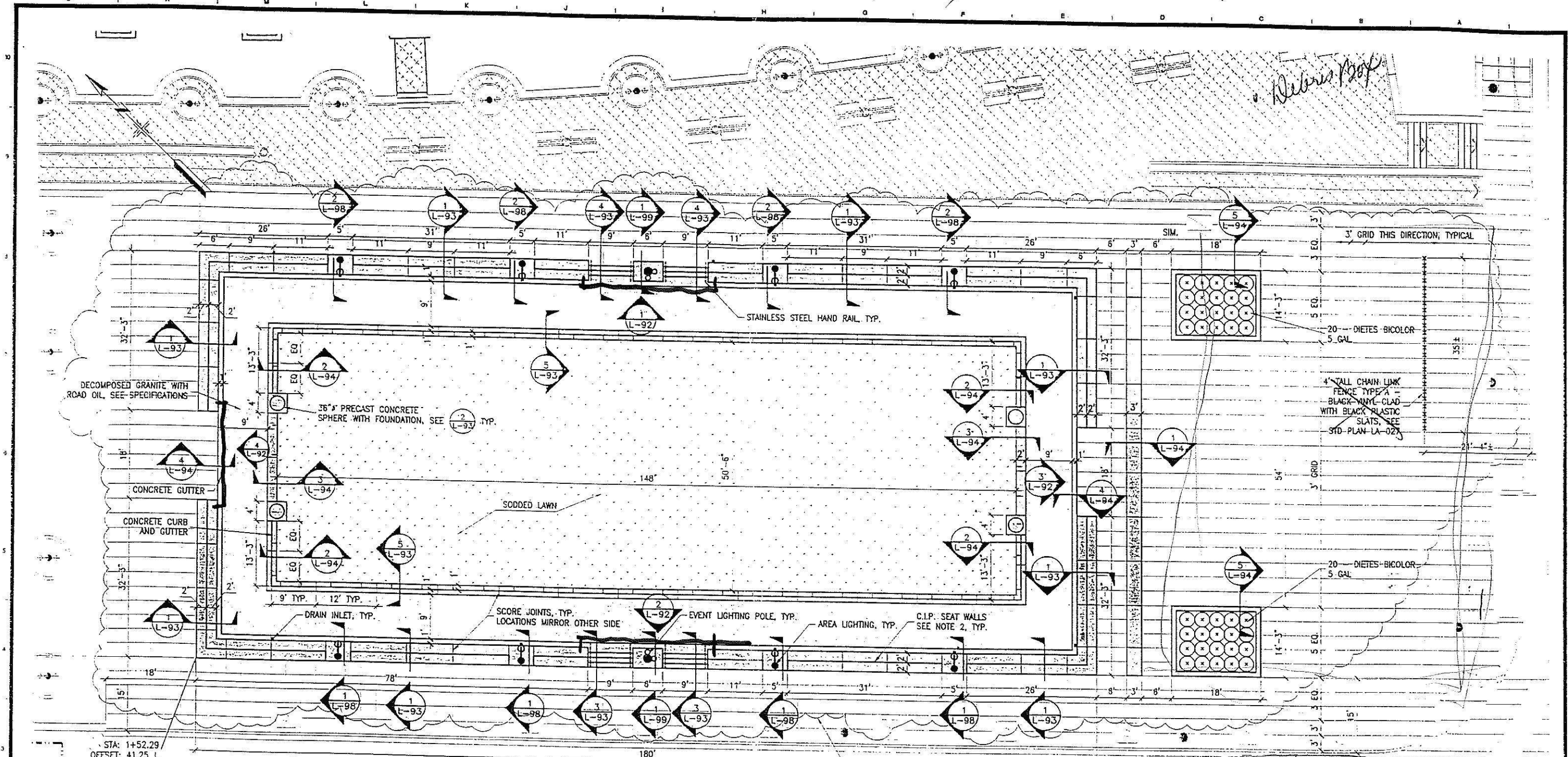
GEORGE W. BELL IRRIGATION CONSULTANT	EMBARCADERO PLAZA EMBARCADERO LOWER MARKET APPROVED REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA E1	SCALE: 1"=20'-0" DATE: JAN 25, 1969 DRAWN BY: G.B.
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Appendix E – 1997-1999 ROMA Design Group Renovation Drawings

The following selected drawings dated 1997-1999 were prepared by the architecture firm ROMA Design Group for the redesign of Embarcadero Plaza, and are on file at the Department of Recreation and Parks.

CR W/ Bonnie Re
 dumpster location, lighting plan
 marked by Dunn



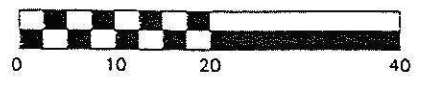
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 delete inside gutter &
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+ extra soft.
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- NOTES:
1. REVISIONS WITHIN CLOUDED AREA SUPERCEDE LAYOUT PLAN L-15.
 2. ALL SHADED CONCRETE AREAS TO BE EMBARCADERO GREY, HALF STRENGTH, SAND BLAST FINISH.

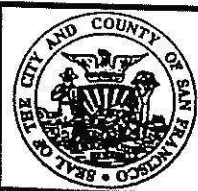
bid \$600,000
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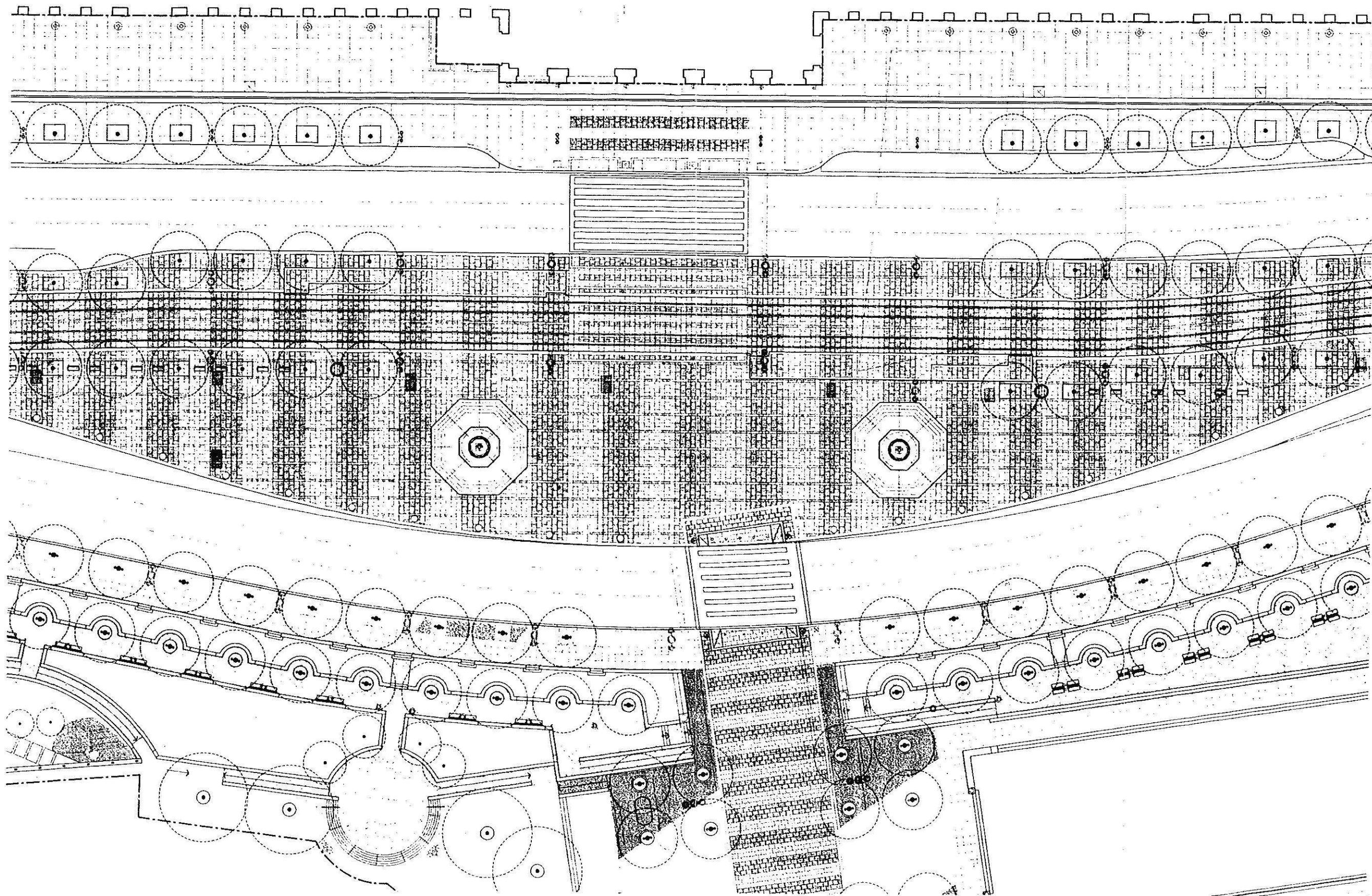
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SC 05/99	
CHECKED: DATE:	DIVISION MANAGER DATE:
GK 05/99	
	CITY ENGINEER DATE:

SCALE:
 1" = 10'
 SHEET OF SHEETS

MID EMBARCADERO SURFACE ROADWAY
 AND F-LINE EXTENSION
 SOUTH OF MARKET OPEN SPACE
 LAYOUT PLAN

SPECIFICATION NO.
 60940
 DRAWING NO.
 L-91
 FILE NO.
 67,664
 REV. NO.
 1



MID-EMBARCADERO ROADWAY
 BUREAU OF ENGINEERING/DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
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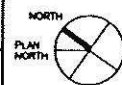
ROMA
 ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
 URBAN DESIGN AND PLANNING
 ROMA Design Group
 1127 Stockton Street
 San Francisco, California 94133
 Telephone (415) 411-2900

CONSULTANTS
 Mr. Aronson - Horticulture at
 The Engineering Enterprise - Lighting Consultants
 Greg Raja - Associated Architects
 Sutter Associates Inc. - Assoc. Landscape
 Architects
 Saylor Consulting Group - Construction
 Consultants
 Sierra Engineering Group - Structural Engineers
 Tamarack Consulting Engineers - MEP Consultants

ARTISTS
 Stanley Sakowitz
 Barbara Stauffacher-Solomon
 Ylio Acunich
 Rusty Simons
 Ben Harwood

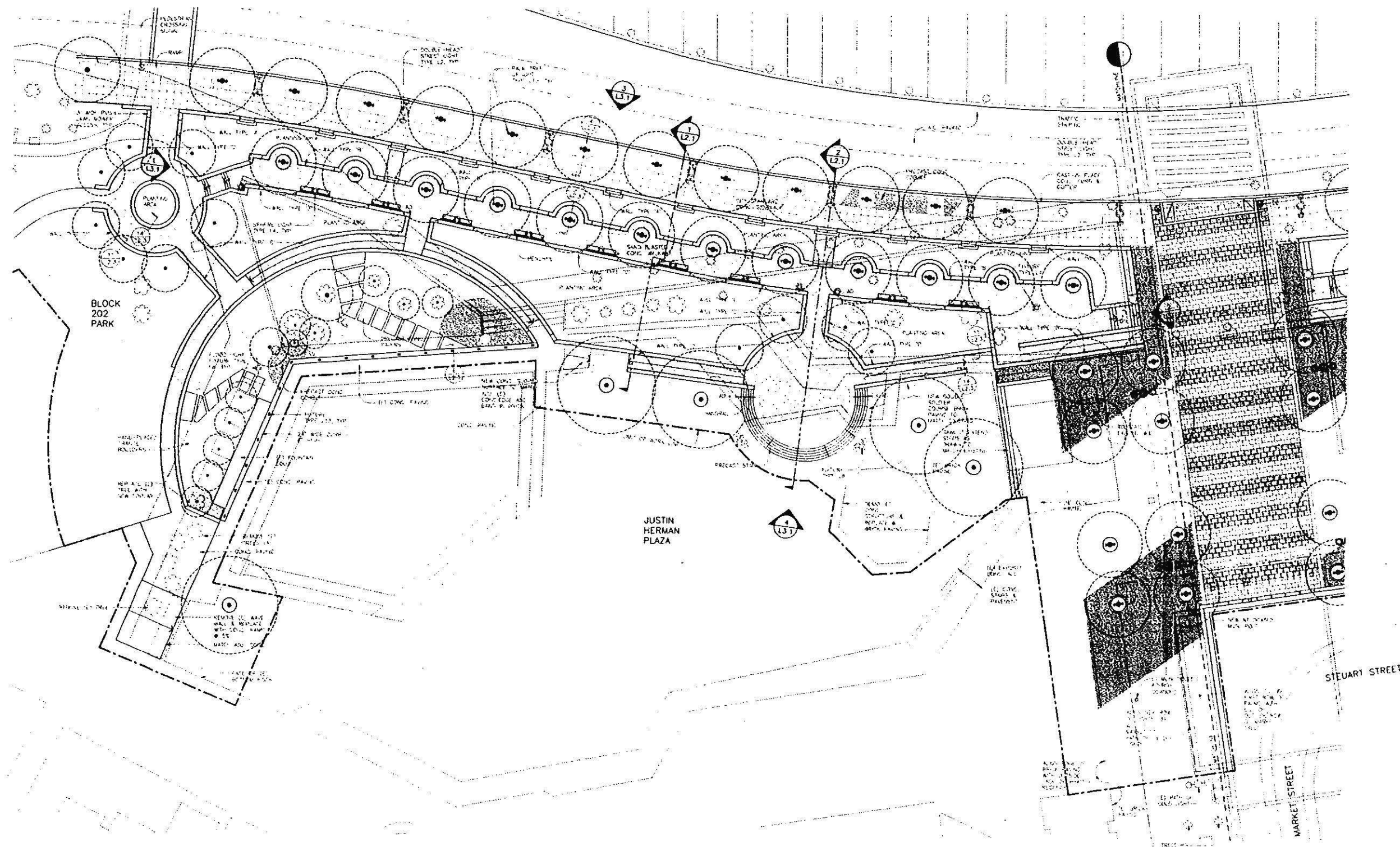
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 15 APRIL 97



SHEET TITLE:
CITYSIDE TRANSITION
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT DRAWINGS
PARTIAL KEY PLAN
 -NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION-

SHEET NO.
L1A



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 The Engineering Enterprise - Lighting Consultants
 Greg Rios - Associated Architect
 Sasaki Associates Inc. - Assoc. Landscape Architects
 Saylor Consulting Group - Construction Consultants
 Senn Engineering Group - Structural Engineers
 Talmadge Consulting Engineers - MEP Consultants

ARTISTS

Shirley Sabinowitz
 Barbara Stauffacher/Sabinowitz
 Vito Acconci
 Buster Simpson
 G. L. Kunkel

REVISIONS

15 APR 97

SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

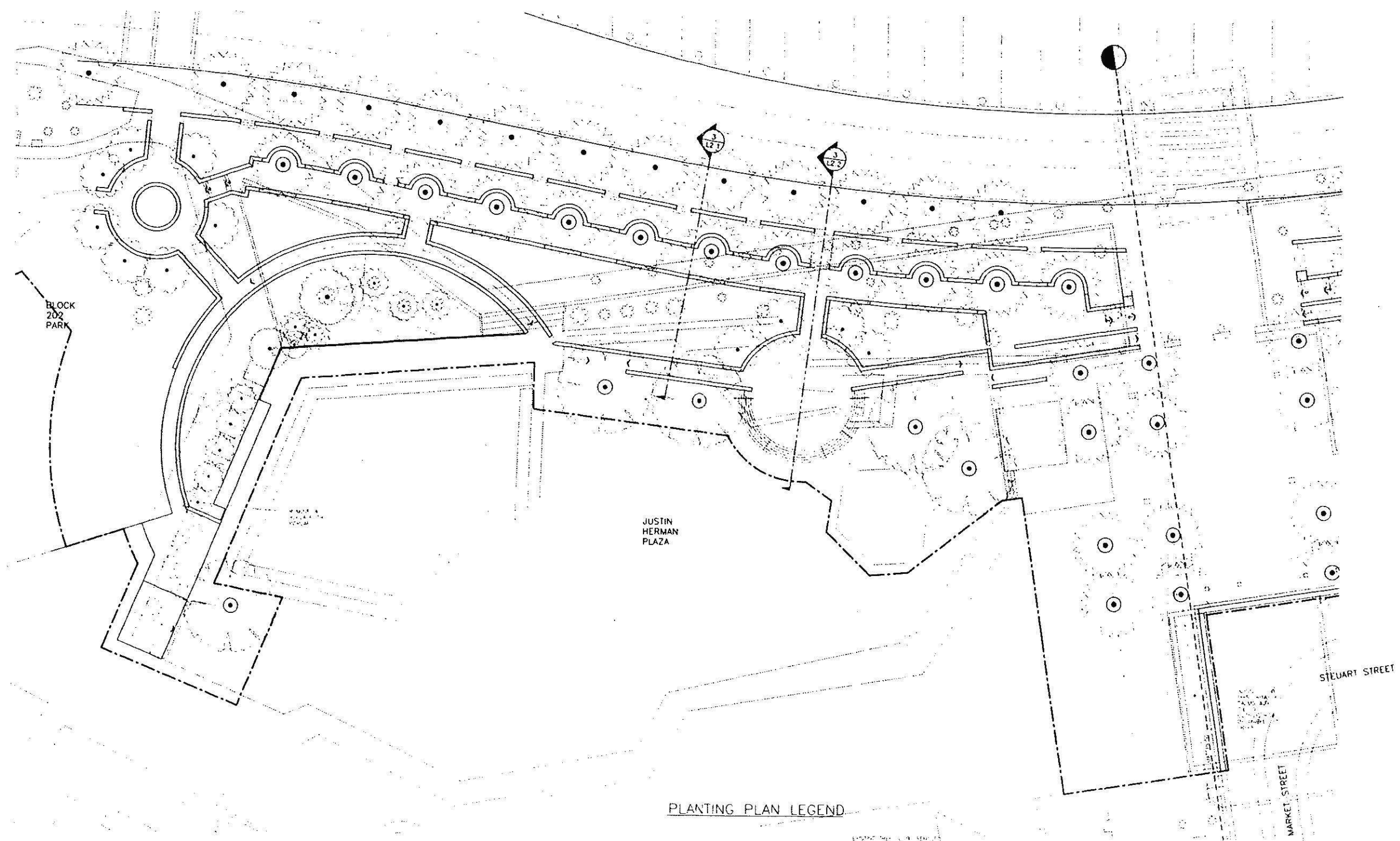
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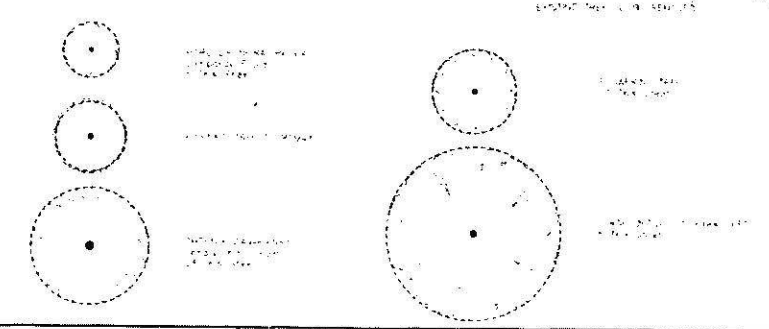
CITYSIDE TRANSITION
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT DRAWINGS
PARTIAL PAVING & LAYOUT PLAN
 -NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION-

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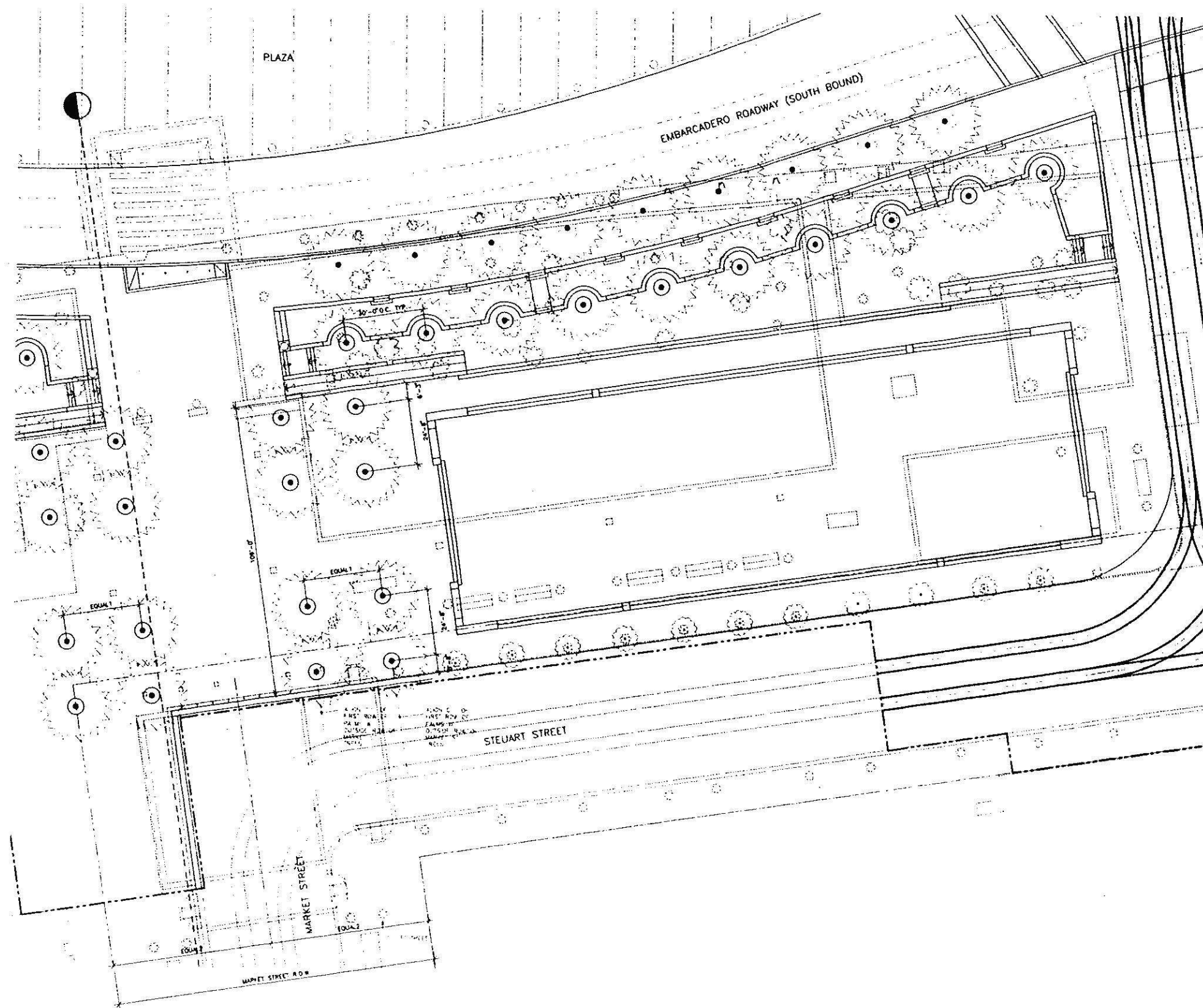
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PLANTING PLAN LEGEND

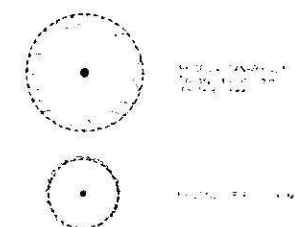


<p>MID-EMBARCADERO ROADWAY BUREAU OF ENGINEERING/DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA</p>	<p>ROMA ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE URBAN DESIGN AND PLANNING 1521 Jackson Street San Francisco, California 94133 Telephone: (415) 774-3300</p>	<p>CONSULTANTS Van Arman - Urban/Rural The Engineering Enterprise - Lighting Consultants Gig Poja - Associated Architects Baker Associates Inc. - Assoc. Landscape Architects Baylor Consulting Group - Construction Consultants Baker Engineering Group - Structural Engineers Toussaint Consulting Engineers - MEP Consultants</p>	<p>ARTISTS Stanley Benowitz Barbara Braunfischer/Solomon Vito Acconchi Blake Simpson Bill Meehan</p>	<p>REVISIONS</p>	<p>SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0" DATE: 15 APRIL 97</p>	<p>SHEET TITLE: CITYSIDE TRANSITION DESIGN DEVELOPMENT DRAWINGS PARTIAL PLANTING PLAN -NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION-</p>	<p>SHEET NO: L1.3A</p>
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MUNI BUS
LAYOVER AREA

PLANTING PLAN LEGEND



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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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REVISIONS

SCALE:
1/16" = 1'-0"
DATE:
15 APRIL 97

SHEET TITLE:
CITYSIDE TRANSITION
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT DRAWINGS
PARTIAL PLANTING PLAN
-NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION-

SHEET NO:
L1.3B

Appendix F – 2016 DPR 523 Forms from Better Market Street EIR

The following DPR 523B (Building, Structure, and Object Record) and 523L (Continuation Sheet) forms were prepared by January Tavel, ICF, in March 2016 for Justin Herman Plaza (Embarcadero Plaza). The DPR forms were included in “Appendix 6: Cultural Resources Supporting Information” of the Better Market Street Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (February 27, 2019), Planning Department Case No. 2014.0012E, State Clearinghouse No. 2015012027, which was accessed online February 2025, <https://sfplanning.org/project/better-market-street-environmental-review-process#info>.

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Justin Herman Plaza

*Recorded by January Tavel, ICF

*Date March 30, 2016 ☐ Continuation ☐ Update

B1. Historic Name: Embarcadero Plaza, Ferry Park Plaza

B2. Common Name: Justin Herman Plaza

B3. Original Use: Pedestrian plaza B4. Present Use: Pedestrian Plaza

*B5. Architectural Style: Modern

*B6. Construction History: Vaillancourt fountain completed in 1971. Plaza completed in 1972. The plaza's setting was substantially altered in 1989 when the Loma Prieta earthquake damaged the Embarcadero Freeway and in 1991 when the Embarcadero Freeway was demolished. The alley of palm trees along the eastern boundary and along the pathway connecting Market Street to the Ferry Building the plaza were added by 2000. The southern boundary lawn was remodeled as a bocce court in November 2010. (See continuation sheets for further construction history)

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features: Market Street, the Embarcadero

B9a. Architect: Lawrence Halprin & Associates (architect) b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Urban planning in the Twentieth Century

Area Architecture, Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance 1972

Property Type Site (designed landscape)

Applicable Criteria C/3

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Context Statement

Market Street Redevelopment Plan

Justin Herman Plaza was an individual project implemented as part of the City of San Francisco's broader effort to redevelop the Embarcadero area. Although it was funded separately, Justin Herman Plaza was included as a component of the design concept for the Market Street Redevelopment Plan (MSRP). The MSRP, which was designed by the Market Street Joint Venture Architects, Mario J. Ciampi & Associates, John Carl Warnecke & Associates, Lawrence Halprin & Associates, sought to resolve Market Street's economic importance as San Francisco's main circulation spine with its symbolic, social, commercial, and civic importance through plaza development, removal of visually cluttering commercial signage, and sidewalk landscape designs intended to blend new street-level Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) facilities into the overall streetscape.

(See continuation sheets for further evaluation of significance)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: HP29, Landscape architecture; HP31, Urban Open Space;

*B12. References:

See continuation sheets for references.

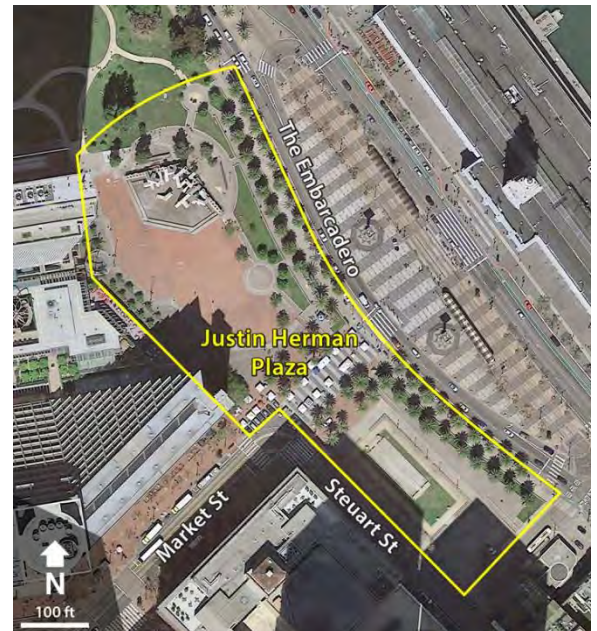
B13. Remarks: n/a

*B14. Evaluator: January Tavel, ICF

*Date of Evaluation: March 30, 2016

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required)



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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Justin Herman Plaza

*Recorded by January Tavel, ICF *Date March 30, 2016

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***B6. Construction History (cont.)**

Embarcadero Plaza (also referred to as Ferry Building Park), which was completed in 1972 and renamed Justin Herman Plaza in 1974 to honor Justin Herman, the director of the SFRA (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania 1974), was one of the most prominent elements of this MSRP redevelopment initiative. Designed by Lawrence Halprin, the Plaza was bounded in the east by the Embarcadero and the elevated Embarcadero Freeway, in the south by Don Chee Way, and in the north by the Embarcadero Freeway off-ramps to Clay and Washington Streets. The plaza's western boundary included the Embarcadero Center and Hyatt Regency buildings, as well as the eastern end of Market Street.

Prior to the construction of the Golden Gateway project, the site of Justin Herman Plaza was densely built with low-scale commercial and industrial buildings ranging from 1 to 4 stories in height. Buildings facing the Embarcadero on the block between Sacramento and Commercial Streets featured a series of small storefronts and restaurants, whereas buildings further west along Sacramento and Commercial included more industrial uses including a ship storage and service yard, several single story stores, storage structures, and a hotel. The block between Commercial Street and Clay Street included a one-story gas station at the corner of this block along the Embarcadero, and restaurants, stores and residential hotels further to the west. All of the properties on the site prior to construction of the plaza appear to have supported the workers and shipping/trade uses along the Embarcadero (**Image 1-4**) (1913-1950 San Francisco Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Volume 1, Sheets 11 and 12).

While the Embarcadero Plaza was not part of the Market Street Reconstruction Project, conceptually, it served as the anchor to the Market Street Redevelopment Plan (MSRP) sequence, connecting the street to the Ferry Building and the waterfront despite the freeway obstruction (Hirsch 2014:17). The four-acre plaza was characterized by an irregular pentagon-shaped plan reminiscent of an Italian piazza. Pedestrian circulation through the plaza was structured along two axes—a primary axis along the pedestrian promenade connecting Market Street with the Ferry Building, and the north-south access through the Plaza. The sunken plaza consisted primarily of red brick laid in a running bond pattern, broken by double red brick courses radiating in a sunburst pattern from the fountain (**Image 6**). The lower plaza was edged in concrete and stairs from the upper plaza on the western boundary that descended down to the lower plaza were also concrete. Paving of the upper terrace on the western boundary was granite. The southeastern boundary of the main plaza included a terraced concrete platform (**Image 5**). The main plaza also featured a circular terraced concrete island platform near its southern boundary (**Image 5**).

Justin Herman Plaza featured modern light standards with semi-translucent square luminaires mounted on square, light-colored granite columns (**Images 7, 9, 10**). The pedestrian promenade that connected Market Street with the Ferry Building featured light standards symmetrically arranged along the allée. Original concrete bollards were square granite reflecting the style of the original light standards spanning the width of the pedestrian promenade that connects Market Street with the Ferry Building at both the east and west ends (**Image 8**). Vegetation within the plaza also included circular, 5-foot diameter stone flower tubs (**Images 10, 11**). A purchase list from The Marina Florist, dated May 29, 1970, records a variety of plants tagged for purchase for the Embarcadero Plaza: Lombardy Poplar (*Populus Nigra Italica*) – four 30" boxes and ten 24" boxes, twenty-seven 15 gallon buckets; Japanese black pine (*Pinus Thunbergii*) – one 24" box, one 15 gallon bucket; Austrian Pine (*Pinus Nigra*) – three 24" boxes; Scots pine (*Pinus Sylvestris*) – three 24" box; Monterey Pine (*Pinus Radiata*) – ten 24" boxes, thirty 15 gallon buckets; London planetree (*Platanus acerifolia*) – forty-one 15 gallon buckets, eighteen 20" boxes; and 42,000 square feet of sod (50% Windsor and 50% Newport) (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania 1970b). While additional research would be required to discover the plaza's specific planting plan, in general, pines were planted along the property's eastern boundary (along the Embarcadero) and sycamores (London planetrees) were planted along the western boundary of the plaza and along Steuart Street (**Image 8**). A cluster of sycamores was also placed on either side of the pedestrian promenade's western entrance. In addition, the western boundary of Justin Herman Plaza's upper terrace, adjacent to the Embarcadero Center development, features wood benches (**Image 12**). Statues of Bautista de Anza and Carlos III of Spain were also present in Justin Herman Plaza. Correspondence between Lawrence Halprin and Justin Herman discussed the location of Juan Bautista de Anza statue at the southern end of the plaza adjacent to the lawn, but did not explicitly discuss where the Carlos III of Spain statue was placed within the plaza (**Image 13**) (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania 1968). Both statues were relocated from Justin Herman Plaza to Lake Merced in 2004 (San Francisco Visual Arts Committee 2004).

Halprin conceived of the plaza as an environment for public participation and hired Canadian-Québécois artist Armand J. R. Vaillancourt to design a Modernist fountain for the lower terrace. Vaillancourt was born on September 3, 1929 in the city of Black Lake, Quebec, Canada. He is widely known as a Quebecois sculptor, painter, and performance artist. He received formal training in art at the Ecole des beaux-arts de Montreal (Beaudry 2013). The fountain in Justin Herman Plaza has become a source of controversy since its inception. Completed in 1971, the fountain measures approximately 40 feet in height, 200 feet in length, and 140 feet in width. It is composed of steel and precast concrete square tubes arranged in irregular angles. The concrete finish was highly textured. The fountain was designed to pump one million gallons of water an hour through the tubes, which spill into a pool below. There were two walkways with stairs that allow the public to stand between the tubes and offer views overlooking the plaza. The fountain featured concrete square platforms within the pool, which allowed the public to venture between the fountain's back wall and tube projections.

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Justin Herman Plaza

*Recorded by January Tavel, ICF *Date March 30, 2016

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

The fountain has been used as a site for public gatherings and for making political statements. It is sometimes referred to as the “Québec libre!” sculpture. The name was the result of one of Vaillancourt’s own political actions in which he painted in red letters the phrase “Québec libre!” on the fountain to voice his support for the Quebec sovereignty movement, and more largely his support for the freedom of all people. Similarly in 1987, U2 singer Bono climbed the fountain and wrote “Rock N Roll Stops Traffic” on the sculpture, sparking political controversy and denouncements from then mayor Dianne Feinstein (Cultural Landscape Foundation 2015; Woodbridge 1990:121-24). The plaza’s fountain caused much lively public and media debate regarding its visual appeal and artistic merit upon its completion (Hirsch 2014:79-80).

At the time the plaza was completed, the double-deck Embarcadero Freeway served as a massive backdrop for the fountain, dominating the skyline and cutting the plaza off from the waterfront. The elevated freeway was an integral part of the plaza plan. Halprin saw an opportunity to integrate the freeway into the context of the city by situating Vaillancourt’s fountain in the bend of the freeway ramp so that the ramp and the fountain enclosed the space that makes up the remainder of the plaza. One contemporary article described the aesthetic effectiveness of Halprin’s plan in the following way: “Wheezing vehicles on the freeway seem to weave through the concrete sculpture, giving it kinetic urban essence and, at the same time, embracing and adding dimension to the freeway” (Hirsch 2014: 80).

The fountain was also designed to counter the noise of the nearby freeway with the natural sound of numerous waterfalls cascading into a large pool of water. To create these waterfalls, the fountain was constructed with mechanical equipment that could pump up to 30,000 gallons of water per minute (Katz 1989: 23). During the state’s energy crisis in 2001, the city shut off the water supply to the fountain in an effort to conserve resources. During this time, critics of the fountain used the energy crisis to push for its demolition. Water was restored and plans to demolish the fountain were abandoned in 2004 (San Francisco Chronicle 2004), but, in 2014, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department instituted measures to reduce water consumption and turned off water to Vaillancourt Fountain as part of that initiative (Elton Pon 2014). The space continues to serve as “a gathering place for large civic ritual events, including political rallies, speeches, ceremonies, concerts, and parade culmination or initiation” (Hirsch 2014: 80).

Halprin wrote of his design intent for the plaza and the fountain:

This work has been conceived as a total environment in which all the elements working together create a place for participation. The locus is the termination of Market Street—major boulevard in the city—the Embarcadero freeway encloses the space on the east in massive and dramatic concrete and includes the movement of cars. There will be an enormous building complex to the west with terraces, platforms, shops, restaurants focusing down to the plaza. Many people. The plaza is a theater for events to happen. The fountain is the pivotal point in the plaza. It has been purposely placed off the axis of Market Street to avoid the Renaissance quality of objects in visual static relationship and to one point perspective. The back wall defines the space it also serves as wind and sun trap. The sculpture is an outgrowth of the wall and not thought of as a separate element in space. It is an environmental event in which water, light and people are each a part of the sculpture as are the solid forms. It is basically made of concrete because it must be part of the environment not an object within it (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania 1966: 190-193).

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***B10. Significance (cont.):**

On June 6, 1962, a meeting of Market Street businessmen, property owners, and officers of San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association, resulted in agreement on three objectives, "to transform Market Street into one of the world's most attractive boulevards; to rid Market Street of its shabby atmosphere; and to put new life into Market Street as a center of Bay Area business, shopping, and entertainment" (San Francisco Public Library 1962:5). Recognizing "the complexity of the problems of Market Street, the committee retained a team of consultants—urban planners, designers and real estate experts—to tackle the challenge of surveying and analyzing Market Street in the interest of defining its problems and suggesting an approach to revitalization.

In December 1962, *What To Do About Market Street* was published by Livingston and Blayney, City and Regional Planners, in association with Lawrence Halprin and Associates, Landscape Architects, Rockrise and Weston, Architects, and Larry Smith and Co., Real Estate Consultants. The document proposed a program of redevelopment that featured improvements to the environment including "better designed, more effective signs, both public and private," "more attractively designed street furniture, such as benches, newsstands, and litter cans," "beautiful landscaping, tree planting, fountains, and sculpture," and "squares, plazas, and arcades where people can gather and enjoy themselves" (San Francisco Public Library 1962:7).

What To Do About Market Street formally articulates Lawrence Halprin's first thoughts on the physical environment of Market Street, including the location where it met the Embarcadero, which he recorded in his "Monday meander on Market Street" notes from July 3, 1962 (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of *Pennsylvania* 1962). In his notes, Halprin comments on the need for a fountain adjacent to the Ferry Building such that "the objectionable qualities of the Embarcadero Freeway would be minimized" and remarks to "look into the question of depressing a plaza" (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of *Pennsylvania* 1962).

The Market Street Joint Venture Architects—Mario J. Ciampi of Mario J. Ciampi & Associates, John Carl Warnecke of John Carl Warnecke & Associates, and Lawrence Halprin, of Lawrence Halprin & Associates—were hired to collaborate on development on the MSRP. The MSRP refers to the designed landscape that the joint venture architects created for the section of Market Street between the Embarcadero and Octavia Boulevard. The MSRP included design of the streetscape, design of two major plazas (UN Plaza and Hallidie Plaza), and design of four minor plazas (Robert Frost Plaza, Mechanics Plaza, Mark Twain Plaza, and Market Street Plaza). The MSRP incorporated Embarcadero Plaza/Justin Herman Plaza (funded through a separate redevelopment project) into its design concept footprint as an anchoring element of the Market Street corridor. The MSRP also incorporated Crocker Plaza, funded through a private project, into its design concept. The MSRP differs from the Market Street Reconstruction Project, which refers more specifically to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's 1967–1982 project associated with BART construction. The Market Street Reconstruction Project did not include Embarcadero/Justin Herman Plaza.

As the 1967 Market Street Design Plan Summary Report produced by the City and County of San Francisco in consultation with the design team explained:

Market Street has the potentiality of dynamic economic growth and, importantly, the possibilities of self-renewal. However, the construction of the new subways and new buildings will not in themselves produce a greater Street than there has been in the past. These natural assets can only be developed to their future civic possibilities through the reconstruction of the Street in the manner of a great thoroughfare. Attractive landscaping, paving, street furniture, and inviting public open spaces must be provided (San Francisco Public Library 1967:3).

In 1968, the Schematic Street Design Plan (included Embarcadero Plaza as a component) developed by the joint venture architects, was adopted by board of Supervisors (Res. 116-68) (Knight 1985:2). While the MSRP was not executed to the full extent envisioned in the Schematic Street Design Plans, the design sought to prioritize the pedestrian experience through plaza development, introduction of coordinated street furnishing amenities, removal of street-level Muni transit (streetcars, trolley buses, overhead wires), and blending of new street-level BART facilities into the overall streetscape.

Concurrent with the effort to redesign Market Street were plans to redevelop the Embarcadero area near Market Street. The Golden Gateway redevelopment project included construction of Embarcadero Center, a multi-block retail and office complex of five towers and two hotels adjacent to the Embarcadero just north of Market Street. Designed by John C. Portman, Jr., of John Portman and Associates, the project was built in stages from 1971-1973. The Redevelopment Agency saw an opportunity to establish a public open space/plaza between the waterfront and Embarcadero Center. This open space is what became known initially as Embarcadero Plaza, and later Justin Herman Plaza (Brown 2016b:47, 190, 245).

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Justin Herman Plaza was created as part of the Ferry Building Park project. The *Ferry Building Park Preliminary Report*, prepared by a joint venture of Lawrence Halprin & Associates, Landscape Architects, John S. Bolles, Architect, FAIA, Mario J. Ciampi, Architect, FAIA, describe the goal of that redevelopment project within this context:

...it is intended that the Ferry Building Park would become part of a great development at the foot of Market Street and extend both north and south along the entire San Francisco waterfront. This waterfront should recapture for the people of the city this great resource of the Bay. It should contain marinas, shopping areas, great waterfront views, restaurants, waterfront activities of all kinds, and will go a long way towards making San Francisco that great city on the Bay which it has the potential to become (Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania 1964).

Urban Renewal and Revitalization through Landscape Design and Urban Planning in the United States and San Francisco, 1945-1980

Responding to federal redevelopment programs of the 1950s that privileged the needs of the automobile over the pedestrian, Justin Herman Plaza is an example of a designed urban landscape that prioritized the activities of pedestrians. "The failure of government-sponsored urban planning, the insensitive severity of Modernist planning and architecture, pent-up demands for racial equity, and the maturing of liberal-minded baby boomers were all forces that led to greater social responsiveness in the design professions beginning in the 1960s" (Pregill and Volkman 1999: 710). In 1966 the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act established the Model Cities Program, which mandated citizen input into planning decisions and required neighborhood preservation rather than demolition be part of urban improvement. This project represents a transition to a new phase of urban renewal and revitalization through landscape design in the last half of the twentieth century that gave greater focus to pedestrian-oriented public spaces and increased responsiveness to context. Plazas were included among the site types that were most important during this era as designers looked to the creation of these and other spaces (mixed-use centers, the downtown mall, redeveloped waterfront) as key devices for bolstering urban economic and social activity (Pregill and Volkman 1999: 721).

In most cities, the task of coordinating urban renewal fell to newly created local redevelopment agencies. In San Francisco, Justin Herman directed the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency during a particularly active period from 1959 until 1971. As with other city redevelopment agencies throughout the country, the SFRA leveraged federal funding and new powers to acquire land through eminent domain to facilitate redevelopment by razing large sections of San Francisco. At the time, this large-scale clearance was considered a necessary technique, which provided an environment for the redeveloped area that would prevent it from returning to its former blighted condition. However, this method displaced thousands of residents and businesses, proving especially disruptive to San Francisco's low-income, black and Asian communities (Brown 2010b:41). Project examples included Western Addition A-1, Diamond Heights, Golden Gateway, and Yerba Buena Center.

By 1960s, local opposition to the devastation wrought by urban renewal to existing residents and historic fabric echoed nationwide criticism. Through the 1970s, projects across the country and in San Francisco began shifting focus to reuse and rehabilitation rather than full-scale neighborhood clearance (Brown 2010b:41-42). Lawrence Halprin received national attention for master planning an early San Francisco example—Ghirardelli Square complex near Fisherman's wharf (1962-1965)—which successfully adapted an industrial complex for commercial use (Knight 1975: 7; Brown 2010b:1949). In addition to pioneering the adaptive reuse concept, the project also leveraged landscape design for urban revitalization through design of fountains, lighting, planting, and outdoor performance spaces (Brown 2010b:149).

Justin Herman Plaza: Design of Master Landscape Architect, Lawrence Halprin

Although the three designers associated with the Market Street Redevelopment Plan in San Francisco—architect Mario Ciampi, architect John Carl Warnecke, and landscape architect Lawrence Halprin—collaborated on the development of the MSRP project, Halprin was the primary designer of Justin Herman Plaza (Hirsch 2014: 82-83). He developed his expertise as master landscape architect during the period of renewal and revitalization from 1945-1980 and within the context of increasing collaboration among design disciplines. He was a thought-leader in the environmental design community, applying new approaches to urban placemaking that modeled pedestrian-oriented design, harmonizing Modern design within historic settings, development of public spaces for positive economic and social impact, and collaborative design processes. Halprin's participation in the joint venture collaboration, including design of Justin Herman Plaza, helped elevate the influence of landscape architecture as a discipline that provides essential perspective on modern urban planning and illustrated the viability of prioritizing sensitivity to the human experience and the existing built environment as part of the urban redevelopment process.

Lawrence Halprin (1916–2009):

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Born in New York City, Lawrence Halprin earned a B.S. in Plant Sciences from Cornell University in 1939 and continued his studies at University of Wisconsin where he earned a M.S. in Horticulture. As a graduate student, Halprin visited Taliesin, the home of master architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. This experience inspired his interest in design and motivated his enrollment at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design where he earned a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree in 1944 (Brown 2010b:270). Like Warnecke, Halprin studied under Walter Gropius at Harvard, as well as Marcel Breuer, who is also recognized as a master of Modernist architecture (Brown 2010b:760). During World War II, Halprin served in the Navy and was assigned to the USS Morris. When his ship was destroyed, Halprin was given leave in San Francisco, where he remained (Brown 2010b:270).

Halprin's design career in the San Francisco Bay Area began with a focus on residential garden design. From 1945-1949, Halprin worked with master landscape architect, Thomas Church (Brown 2010b:144-145). Collaboration included work on the Dewey Donnell Garden in Sonoma County (Brown 2010b:271), notable as a quintessential example of residential landscape design in the "California Style," which integrates the site with surrounding natural landscape through "repetition of forms or materials, and careful use of a variety of forms to link the hard, geometric lines of buildings with the more irregular, flowing lines of natural landscapes" (Pregill and Volkman 1999: 740-742).

In 1949, Halprin opened his own firm, Lawrence Halprin & Associates Landscape Architects in 1949. He escalated to designing large-scale planned residential complexes, such as the San Francisco projects Parkmerced (1949, with Thomas Church) and St. Francis Square (1961) (Brown 2010b:147-148), but is best known for his work at Sea Ranch (1962-1967) near Gualala, California. The iconic complex of condominiums at Sea Ranch is sited in a bucolic coast area of Sonoma County and is considered a master work of the Third Bay Tradition design. For this project, collaboration with the architectural firm, Esherick, Homsey, Dodge & Davis (EHDD), Lawrence Halprin created the landscape and development plan, which clustered buildings and provided large areas of community open space (Brown 2010b:133).

In the late 1930s into the 1950s, a growing collaboration between architects and landscape architects resulted in a new synthesis of buildings and landscapes (Brown 2010b:139-140). While residential landscape design formed the foundation of most landscape architects' practices before the 1940s, landscape architects in the post-WWII era increasingly expanded their practice to include master planning, campus planning, site planning, and regional planning (Brown 2010: 141). Through the work of his firm, Halprin reasserted the landscape architect's role as distinct from planners or architects in regenerating the American city by making vital social and pedestrian spaces out of formerly marginal sites such as historic industrial complexes or the spaces over or under freeways. "In doing so, they re-imagined a public realm for American cities that had been cleared by federal urban renewal programs and abandoned for new suburban developments" (Meyer 2008). Halprin's leadership included collaboration with Livingston and Blayney and George Thomas Rockrise on the 1962 *What to do about Market Street* planning proposal (Brown 2010b:247) and subsequent collaboration with Mario J. Ciampi and John Carl Warneke on the Market Street Redevelopment Plan.

Landscape designers helped play an important role in shaping the form, spatial configuration, and uses of corporate plazas, landscapes, and public spaces during the Modern period. In addition to his work associated with Market Street and associated plazas, the evolution of Halprin's career included commercial and corporate designed landscapes like the rooftop garden at the Fairmont Hotel (1961), Bank of America plaza (1967), the Yerba Buena Gardens Master Plan (1969), and Embarcadero Center Master Plan (including plazas and shopping center courtyards)(1969-1974), and design of the plaza at One Embarcadero Center (1967) (Brown 2010b:135, 138, 148-150).

Halprin is also recognized a pioneer of adaptive reuse design for his work on master planning for the Ghirardelli Square project (1962-1965), which transformed an industrial complex into public plaza and shopping center in the San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf area (completed 1968, included on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982) (Brown 2010b:149). In his book, *Cities*, Halprin wrote:

We need, in cities, buildings of different ages, reflecting the taste and culture of different periods, reminding us of our past as well as our future. Some buildings are beautiful or striking enough to have their useful periods artificially extended by preservation—almost like seed trees in a forest—so that succeeding generations can enjoy them, and through them maintain a sense of continuity with the past. Old buildings and old sections of cities establish a character, a flavor of their own, which often becomes the most interesting and provocative part of a city. Part of this is due to scale, since each age develops its own sense of scale and relationship of parts (Halprin 1963:216-217)

Halprin's work is marked by his attention to human scale, user experience, and social impact of his designs. He is credited for developing innovative design development processes such as "motation," and "RSVP Cycles." Motation offered an alternative to traditional devices for creating form such as plans and elevations. Instead, motation, used movement as a starting point to generate form (Hirsch 2014: 11-13). Similarly, RSVP cycles is a collaborative approach meant to guide the development of formal design and participatory process. It included the components of resources (preexisting site conditions and the act of inventorying them), scores (temporal-situational guidelines that structure unfolding performance), valuation (a term Halprin coined for the critical feedback process that leads to consistent revision of the scores), and performance (acting out of the scores) (Hirsch 2014: 4-5).

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As such, Halprin's projects are memorable for their striking forms and sequences that evoke multiple associations and recall varied references. The signature vocabulary that characterizes his work, particularly water features, includes a fractured urban ground terraced to choreograph the movement of bodies of water rendered in poured-in-place concrete that simultaneously evoke monumental geological forms and dynamic ecological processes (Meyer 2008). Many of his projects reflect these ideals, including those beyond the San Francisco Bay area.

Nicollet Mall (1962–1967), a 12-block pedestrian street and transit mall in the shopping and dining district of Minneapolis, was designed as the first transit mall in the United States and was created to help downtown retail compete with shopping in the suburbs. Like Market Street, Nicollet Avenue was historically Minneapolis's "parade street." For both of these projects, Halprin was given the chance to enhance the quality of civic rituals as collective participatory events (Hirsch 2014: 84). Although it was redesigned in 1990, Nicollet Mall is recognized as being the inspiration for similar projects in Portland, Oregon, and Denver, Colorado (Hirsch 2014: 90, 98). Four of Portland's public spaces were designed by Halprin: Lovejoy Plaza, a multi-block sequence of public fountains and outdoor rooms, featuring the Ira Keller Fountain; Pettigrove Park; Auditorium Forecourt; and the Transit Mall (1965–1978). The Transit Mall, which was a pair of one-way streets with exclusive bus lanes and widened landscaped sidewalks, was redesigned in 2009 (Biggs n.d.). Skyline Park (1975), a one-acre linear park and plaza in Denver, Colorado, was redesigned in 2003. Freeway Park in Seattle, Washington, is noted for its innovative approach to reclaiming an interstate right-of-way for park space (1976). The Downtown Mall in Charlottesville, Virginia, is a pedestrian-only zone contextualized along the city's historic Main Street (1976). His work also includes Heritage Park Plaza (1980) in Fort Worth, Texas, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, D.C. (1997), which contextualizes a modern design aesthetic within the Victorian Gothic Revival, and neo-Classical styles of surrounding monuments of the National Mall.

As a leader in his field, Halprin served on national commissions, including the White House Council on Natural Beauty and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Meyer 2008). He also earned numerous awards and honors, such as the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Gold Medal (1978), the Thomas Jefferson Gold Medal in architecture (1979), and a Michelangelo Award (2005) (Brown 2010b:271).

Significance Summary

NRHP Criterion A and CRHR Criterion 1:

Research did not find that the plaza is associated with any event(s) considered important locally, statewide, or nationally. Although the plaza has been used as a site for public discourse, political protests, and civic gatherings (political rallies, rock concerts, civic ceremonies, and public speeches) in San Francisco during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, none of the events associated directly with Justin Herman Plaza rise to the level of significance necessary for listing in the state or national registers under Criterion A/1. While Justin Herman plaza is used periodically as the starting point for parades and is part of the civic processional route down Market Street to City Hall, association with significant Market Street processional events that begin at Justin Herman Plaza confers historical association upon the plaza as a component of the Market Street processional route, but does not contribute to the plaza's individual significance. Long before the MSRP was established with Justin Herman Plaza as its eastern anchor, Market Street had been used as a ceremonial and processional route through the city. As such, Justin Herman Plaza is not independently significant at the local, state or national level as a venue for civic engagement in San Francisco under Criterion A/1.

NRHP Criterion B and CRHR Criterion 2:

Research did not indicate association with the productive life of any individual(s) important in the area of civic ritual events or urban renewal projects, or, more broadly, in history at the local, state, or national levels of significance. Although Vaillancourt and U2 singer Bono are well-known public figures, their efforts to raise awareness for the freedom of all people and the power of rock music through painted slogans on the fountain do not rise to the level of singular importance necessary to meet NRHP Criterion B or CRHR Criterion 2. Additionally, even Justin Herman's redevelopment efforts to establish a plaza that was later named after him is insufficient to justify the listing of the property under Criterion B/2. Herman was the former regional director for the federal government's Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) before he was recruited by Mayor George Christopher in 1959 to head the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. His 12-year tenure in this position coincided with the most activist period in the nation's history for federal involvement in urban renewal projects. Herman was extremely effective in obtaining federal funding for redevelopment projects in San Francisco—such as Market Street, Diamond Heights, Golden Gateway, Western Addition, and Yerba Buena (Habert 1999). However, sites that might be significant for association with Herman would be those projects that he was directly associated with and that represent the influence he had on San Francisco's urban environment. Sites that are named to commemorate significant people are rarely, if ever, recognized as historically significant. As such, the plaza lacks a significant association with Justin Herman under Criterion B/2.

NRHP Criterion C and CRHR Criterion 3:

Justin Herman Plaza is associated with the work of master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and is significant as an example of how his work helped elevate the influence of landscape architecture as a discipline that provides essential perspective on modern urban planning and illustrate the viability of prioritizing sensitivity to human experience, and the existing built environment as part of the redevelopment

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process. In the case of Justin Herman Plaza, this setting included the San Francisco Bay waterfront, Ferry Building, Embarcadero Freeway and Market Street. Halprin's design, including the Vaillancourt fountain, which invited pedestrian engagement, sought to aesthetically integrate transportation infrastructure into the urban landscape of the city and reconnect the city with the waterfront. Justin Herman Plaza is significant for its association with Halprin's canon of work particularly because these approaches were innovative during the redevelopment era, which prioritized automobiles over pedestrian experience and sought renewal through wholesale demolition instead of complementary integration with the existing context. Thus, for the application of these new approaches to urban design, Justin Herman Plaza appears to be significant at the under NRHP and CRHR Criterion C/3.

Existing Conditions

The following summarizes existing conditions for Justin Herman (Embarcadero) Plaza in terms of Natural Systems and Features, Spatial Organization, Cluster Arrangement, Circulation, Vegetation, Views and Vistas, Constructed Water Features, and Small-Scale Features.

Spatial Organization: Justin Herman Plaza is at the eastern terminus of Market Street adjacent to the Embarcadero. The plaza is bounded in the west by the Embarcadero Center and Hyatt Regency buildings and the eastern end of Market Street. The plaza is no longer bounded in the north by the Embarcadero Freeway Clay and Washington Streets off-ramps. Instead, the boundary is now marked by the terminus of Clay Street and Sue Bierman Park, a 5.3-acre open space that was designed following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, which damaged and led to demolition of the freeway and off-ramps to Clay and Washington Streets in 1991 (**Image 14**). Sue Bierman Park was renovated and renamed in 2011 (San Francisco Parks and Recreation 2016). At the eastern boundary of the plaza, there is a green space buffering the plaza from the Embarcadero where the highway had been. The area was remodeled in 2003 and includes hardscaping that replaced the concrete platform on the southeastern boundary of the plaza and the concrete island that was also in the southern section of the main plaza (**Image 21**). The post-Market Street Redevelopment Plan hardscaping features concrete stairs, ADA-accessibility ramps, and a much narrower grassy area (**Image 19**). Justin Herman Plaza's southern boundary is Don Chee Way. The ground plane of the northern main plaza is characterized by an irregular, pentagon-shaped plan. A pedestrian promenade, which joins the eastern terminus of Market Street to the Embarcadero in front of the Ferry Building (**Image 15**), bisects the northern section of the plaza (main plaza with fountain) and the southern section of the plaza (former lawn area that was remodeled as bocce court in 2010) (**Image 16, 26**). The Vaillancourt-designed fountain is located in the northeast corner of the main plaza's lower terrace.

Circulation: Pedestrian circulation is structured along two axes—a primary axis along the pedestrian promenade connecting Market Street with the Ferry Building (**Image 17**), and the north-south access through the Plaza. The 4-acre brick plaza is terraced, with the upper terrace of concrete descending to the lower plaza via three concrete steps. The sunken lower plaza consists primarily of red brick laid in a running bond pattern. This pattern is broken by double red brick courses radiating in a sunburst pattern from the plaza's fountain (**Image 18**). The lower plaza is edged in concrete and stairs from the upper plaza down to the lower plaza are also concrete. The concrete island platform that was originally positioned in the southeast corner of the lower terrace has been removed and the location has been paved with brick to match the rest of the lower plaza. Other patches to the brick are incompatible materials – those which do not match original historic materials in consistent color, size, and style of original – in a few locations. This includes scored and dyed concrete. Original paving of the upper terrace was granite, which has since been replaced by concrete. Paving in the pedestrian promenade connecting Market Street with the Ferry Building has been replaced by bands of light and dark grey granite flanked by brick laid in a herringbone pattern, which visually extend the Market Street sidewalks.

Vegetation: The eastern boundary of the plaza is lined with Canary Island date palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), which have replaced the pine and poplars that originally divided the plaza and the Embarcadero Freeway (**Image 21**) (Ho 2013). The post-Market Street Redevelopment Plan double allée of palms on either side of the pedestrian promenade are also Canary Island date palms (**Image 23**). Light fixtures are mounted on their trunks. Potted trees clustered around the base of light poles in the main plaza appear to be Queen Palms (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*) (**Image 22**). These pots are not repurposed Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era flower tubs. The trees in the lower plaza area, which are positioned within tree grates that are similar, but not identical to Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era tree grates, appear to be London plane trees (*Platanus acerifolia*). These trees appear to have been added after the lower plaza island was removed. The double row of trees planted along the plaza's western boundary adjacent to the Embarcadero Center development appear to be Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*) (**Image 30**). Trees planted adjacent to the bocce court along Steuart Street are London planetree.

Buildings and Structures: In 1995, a green metal toilet was installed near the eastern end of the pedestrian promenade (**Image 29**). The structure is positioned south of the main plaza and styled consistent with advertising kiosks introduced along Market Street at the same time.

Views and Vistas: Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era views of the Embarcadero Freeway are no longer extant given its collapse and subsequent demolition after the 1989 earthquake. The obstructed Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era view of the Ferry Building and Bay Bridge from Justin Herman Plaza has been opened up with the removal of the freeway. The east-to-west view of the Market Street

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Alignment is visible from the Justin Herman Plaza promenade (**Image 24**). The view of Justin Herman Plaza fountain from the promenade is also intact.

Constructed Water Features: The Justin Herman Plaza fountain (also known as Vaillancourt Fountain) is in the northeastern corner of Justin Herman Plaza (**Image 25**). The fountain measures approximately 40 feet high, 200 feet long, and 140 feet wide. It is composed of steel and precast concrete to form an interactive grotto that allows visitors to move under and through the structure. The precast concrete square tubes are arranged in irregular angles and feature a concrete finish that is highly textured. While the fountain was designed to pump 1 million gallons of water an hour through the tubes and spill it into the pool below, currently no water is flowing. Two walkways with stairs allow the public to stand between the tubes and offer views overlooking the plaza. The fountain also features concrete square platforms within the pool area, which allow the public to venture between the fountain's back wall and tube projections. Guardrails have been added to prevent falls, but do not block access to walking through the fountain or climbing the stairs. At the time the plaza was completed, the double-deck Embarcadero Freeway served as a massive backdrop for the fountain, dominating the skyline and cutting the plaza off from the waterfront. The fountain was positioned in the bend of the freeway ramp so that the ramp and the fountain enclosed the space that makes up the remainder of the plaza. The freeway and ramps are no longer extant, having been demolished following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

Small-Scale Features: None of the original lighting—modern standards with semi-translucent square luminaires mounted on square, light-colored granite square pillars arranged along the pedestrian promenade that connects Market Street with the Ferry Building—remains intact. Replica Path of Gold Light Standards are now placed in the plaza's promenade. Original concrete bollards (square granite reflecting the style of the original light standards) spanning the width of the pedestrian promenade that connects Market Street with the Ferry Building at both the east and west ends have been replaced with circular concrete bollards (**Image 27**). Circular-shaped bronze tree grates in the lower plaza appear to have been added after the lower plaza island was removed (**Image 20**). In a few cases, trees have been removed and their subsequent holes cemented. Square receptacles with conical recycling tops, which are not original, have been placed in the plaza (**Image 28**). Juan Bautista de Anza and Carlos III of Spain statues are no longer present. They were relocated from Justin Herman Plaza to Lake Merced in 2004 (Visual Arts Committee 2004). Public art pieces that have been added to Justin Herman Plaza since its completion include large statues on the upper terrace adjacent to the Embarcadero Center development (**Image 31**) and the American Lincoln Brigade Memorial positioned on the east side of the plaza behind the fountain.

Integrity Evaluation

Feature Status Analysis

The following *Table 1. Feature Analysis Table: Justin Herman Plaza* discusses the plaza's condition in terms of features grouped into the following landscape categories: Spatial Organization, Circulation, Vegetation, Views and Vistas, Constructed Water Features, and Small Scale Features. The table identifies the status of each feature in terms of three status categories: extant, partially extant, or lost. The summary also quantifies the volume of new features added to the major plaza landscapes that undermine integrity.

Table 1. Feature Analysis Table: Justin Herman Plaza

Description	Status	Comments/Analysis
Spatial Organization		
Placement at the eastern-most boundary of Market Street	Extant	The plaza's placement remains consistent, contributing to integrity of location and setting.
Arrangement in an irregular pentagon-shaped plan with terraces, promenade and open space	Extant	The plaza's plan remains consistent, contributing to integrity of design, feeling, and association. Compare Images 5, 6, 7, 8 with Images 14, 15, 16 .
Located adjacent to Embarcadero Freeway	Lost	While plaza's location has not changed, the freeway has been demolished, diminishing setting. Compare Image 6 with Image 14 .
Placement of fountains, small-scale features and	Partial	The open space south of the promenade has been remodeled into bocce courts (Compare Image 8 with Images 16, 26); the open space north of the main plaza has been remodeled but remains an open space (compare Image 6 with Image 14); the

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Description	Status	Comments/Analysis
plantings within the plaza		hardscaping on the eastern edge of the plaza has been remodeled but retains similar configuration, minus the island platform that is lost (Compare Image 5 with Images 14, 21); Together these alterations diminish the plaza's integrity of design, feeling, and association.
Circulation		
Pedestrian circulation along two primary axis	Extant	Pedestrian circulation axis remains intact and contributes to integrity of design, feeling, and association.
Plaza paving	Partial	The lower main plaza retains its brick laid in running bond pattern as paving for pedestrian circulation areas, though integrity of material is diminished in some locations where patches are not made with brick (Image 18). Original paving of the upper terrace was once granite, but has been altered to concrete (Compare Image 5, 12 with Image 30), further diminishing integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
Promenade paving	Lost	Promenade paving integrity is lost (Compare Image 7, 10 and 15, 17). All original paving materials have been altered, undermining integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
Vegetation		
Trees	Partial	Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era pine and poplar trees along the eastern boundary of the plaza have been replaced with palms (Compare Images 6, 8 with Image 21), new double allées of palms have been added to the promenade (Compare Image 7 with Images 15, 17, 23), London planetrees in circular tree grates appear to have been added to the lower plaza when the island was removed (compare Image 5 with Image 15), and potted palms have been added to the lower plaza. Together, these alterations have significantly undermined integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
Views and Vistas		
View of the Embarcadero Highway/Opening of view to Ferry Building and Bay Bridge	Partial	Removal of the highway following the 1989 earthquake resulted in loss of highway view and opening of views of the Ferry Building and Bay Bridge (Compare Image 7 with Image 24). This alteration diminishes integrity of setting.
Constructed Water Features		
Justin Herman Plaza Fountain	Extant	Retaining its overall form and material, the fountain in Justin Herman Plaza contributes to integrity of design, material, and workmanship (Compare Image 6, 9 with Image 25). Although the lack of water flow diminishes feeling, and association, it is not a permanent condition.
Small-Scale Features		
Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era light standards	Lost	Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era promenade lighting alignment has been removed (Compare Images 7, 10 and Images 15, 17). Loss diminishes integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
Market Street Redevelopment Plan-era bollards	Lost	Loss diminishes integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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Description	Status	Comments/Analysis
Juan Bautista de Anza and Carlos III of Spain statues	Lost	Loss diminishes integrity of design, feeling, and association.
Post-Market Street Redevelopment Plan Features		
Public toilet	Non-contributing, added after period of significance	Addition diminishes integrity of design, feeling, and association.
Trash receptacles	Non-contributing, added after period of significance	Addition diminishes integrity of design, feeling, and association.
Public art	Non-contributing, added after period of significance	Addition diminishes integrity of design, feeling, and association.

Feature Integrity Evaluation

Integrity is expressed through the categories of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. When considering eligibility under Criteria C/3, it is most essential for integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association to be retained, as they best convey the place, form, physical components, quality of labor, and processes associated with Justin Herman Plaza's significance as an example of how Lawrence Halprin's work helped elevate the influence of landscape architecture as a discipline that provides essential perspective on modern urban planning, and illustrated the viability of prioritizing sensitivity to human experience and the existing built environment as part of the redevelopment process.

While the integrity of some of the features that are components of the landscape as a whole have been diminished, or even lost, the aggregate integrity of Market Street is retained when an aggregate of features have sufficient integrity in terms of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to express Justin Herman Plaza's historic significance as a cultural landscape associated with the works of master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin.

Based on feature condition analysis, the following integrity evaluation analyzes integrity of Justin Herman Plaza based on location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association

- **Location:** Location is the place where the cultural landscape was constructed. Justin Herman Plaza retains integrity of location through retention of the plaza's position at the eastern terminus of Market Street, bounded in the east by The Embarcadero, in the north by Sue Bierman Park, and in the west by the Embarcadero Center and Hyatt Regency buildings. As such, Justin Herman Plaza has integrity of location.
- **Setting:** Setting is the physical environment of the cultural landscape. While integrity of setting is supported by Justin Herman Plaza's continued positioning as the eastern terminus of Market Street, Spatial Organization has diminished integrity relative to setting based on demolition of the Embarcadero freeway. In addition, altered views of the Embarcadero, Ferry Building, and Bay Bridge has diminished integrity of setting. Overall, Justin Herman Plaza does not retain integrity of setting.
- **Design:** Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a cultural landscape. The Justin Herman Plaza Fountain contributes to the plaza's integrity of design. In addition, spatial organization of the irregular pentagon-shaped plan with terraces, promenade, and southern open space also supports integrity of design, as does retained pedestrian circulation along two primary axes. However, the following spatial organization features contribution to diminished integrity of design: the open space south of the promenade has been remodeled into bocce courts; the open space north of the main plaza has been remodeled but remains an open space; the hardscaping on the eastern edge of the plaza has been remodeled but retains similar configuration, minus the island platform that is lost. Together these alterations diminish the plaza's integrity of design. While retained brick paving in the plaza's lower terrace supports integrity of design, loss of granite paving in the plaza's upper terrace and promenade greatly diminishes integrity of design. Loss of Pine and poplar trees and replacement with palms on eastern boundary diminishes integrity of design, as does addition of palms as replacement for granite light standards in the promenade. Replacement of original square bollards with circular bollards further diminishes integrity of design. Loss of Juan Bautista de Anza and Carlos II of Spain statues diminishes integrity of design. Addition of potted palms, trash receptacles, public toilet, and public art also diminishes integrity of design. Overall, Justin Herman Plaza does not retain a sufficient combination of elements that create its form, plan, space, structure, and style from its period of significance to convey its association with the works of master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin.

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- **Materials:** Materials are the physical elements that were combined during the particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the cultural landscape. Retained Justin Herman Plaza Fountain contributes to the plaza's integrity of materials, but remodeling of the south lawn into bocce courts and hardscaping with island in the main plaza's lower terrace reduces integrity of materials. While the majority of the brick paving in the plaza's lower terrace is retained, locations where there has been patching with alternative materials diminishes integrity of materials. Loss of granite paving in the plaza's upper terrace and promenade greatly diminishes integrity of materials for Justin Herman Plaza. Loss of pine and poplar trees and replacement with palms on eastern boundary also diminishes integrity of materials, as does addition of palms as replacement for granite light standards in the promenade. Replacement of original square bollards with circular bollards further diminishes integrity of materials. Loss of Juan Bautista de Anza and Carlos II of Spain statues diminishes integrity of materials. Addition of potted palms, trash receptacles, public toilet, and public art further diminishes integrity of materials. Overall, Justin Herman Plaza does not retain integrity of materials.
- **Workmanship:** Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history. Retained Justin Herman Plaza Fountain contributes to the plaza's integrity of workmanship, but remodeling of the south lawn into bocce courts and hardscaping with island in the main plaza's lower terrace diminishes integrity of workmanship. The locations where there has been patching in the plaza's lower terrace with alternative materials also undermines integrity of workmanship. Loss of granite paving in the plaza's upper terrace and promenade greatly diminishes integrity of workmanship for Justin Herman Plaza. Loss of pine and poplar trees and replacement with palms on eastern boundary also diminishes integrity of workmanship, as does addition of palms as replacement for granite light standards in the promenade. Replacement of original square bollards with circular bollards further diminishes integrity of workmanship. Loss of Juan Bautista de Anza and Carlos II of Spain statues diminishes integrity of workmanship. Addition of potted palms, trash receptacles, public toilet, and public art further diminishes integrity of workmanship. Overall, Justin Herman Plaza does not retain integrity of workmanship.
- **Feeling:** Feeling is a cultural landscape's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. This expressed as a composite of setting, design, materials, and workmanship. Justin Herman Plaza's integrity has been diminished in all of these categories. Particularly important, the combination of removal of the Embarcadero Freeway and alterations to trees, paving, lighting, and remodeling of the southern lawn to bocce court greatly undermines integrity of feeling. As such, Justin Herman Plaza does not retain integrity of feeling.
- **Association:** Association is the direct link between the important historic event or person and a cultural landscape. This can be expressed by the maintenance of a link to the past through continuation of a traditional use or occupation. While many of the features within categories of spatial organization, circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features are only partially extant or lost, Justin Herman Plaza continues to be used as an open space for public gathering and retains integrity of association.

Thus, the majority of feature categories – spatial organization, circulation, vegetation, views and vistas, constructed water features, and small-scale features do not retain enough integrity to express Justin Herman Plaza's historic significance. As such, there is insufficient integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling to convey Justin Herman Plaza's historic significance.

Conclusions

While Justin Herman Plaza possesses significance under NRHP and CRHR Criterion C/3 for its association with master landscape architect, Lawrence Halprin, alterations to the plaza have greatly diminished its integrity such that it no longer conveys its historic significance as an example of how his work helped elevate the influence of landscape architecture as a discipline that provides essential perspective on modern urban planning, or as an example of his work that illustrates the viability of prioritizing sensitivity to human experience and the existing built environment as part of the redevelopment process.

The property does not appear to be a historical resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has also been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code.

While the plaza does not retain enough integrity to convey its significance as an individually eligible resource, features of the plaza that do retain integrity contribute as components to the integrity of the Market Street cultural landscape. Thus, the proposed status code is 3D (Contributor to a district that has been fully documented according to OHP instructions and appears eligible for listing).

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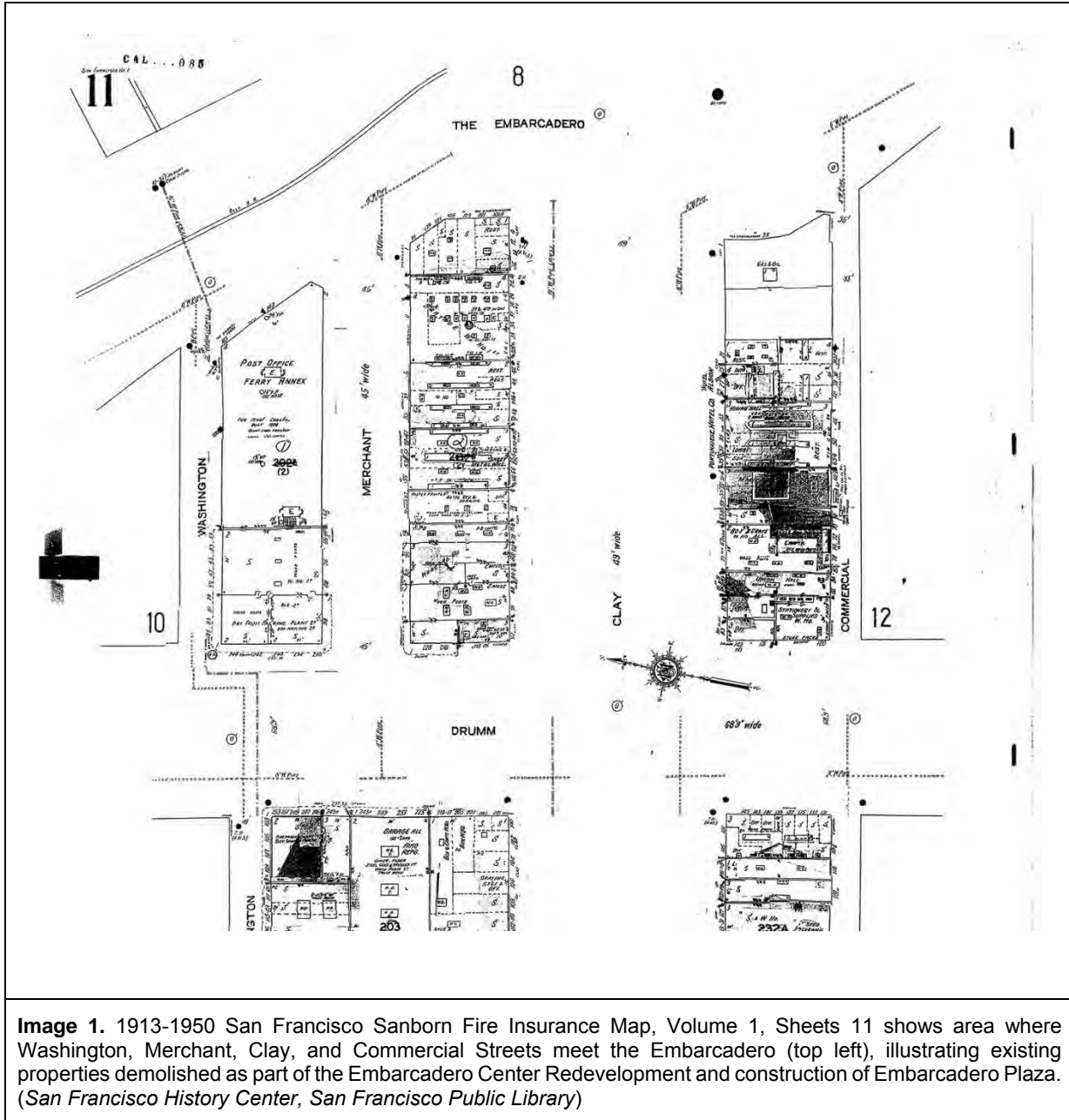
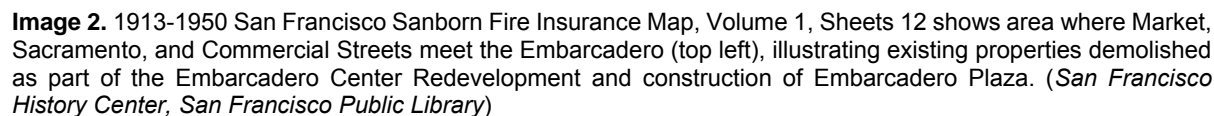


Image 1. 1913-1950 San Francisco Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Volume 1, Sheets 11 shows area where Washington, Merchant, Clay, and Commercial Streets meet the Embarcadero (top left), illustrating existing properties demolished as part of the Embarcadero Center Redevelopment and construction of Embarcadero Plaza. (San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library)



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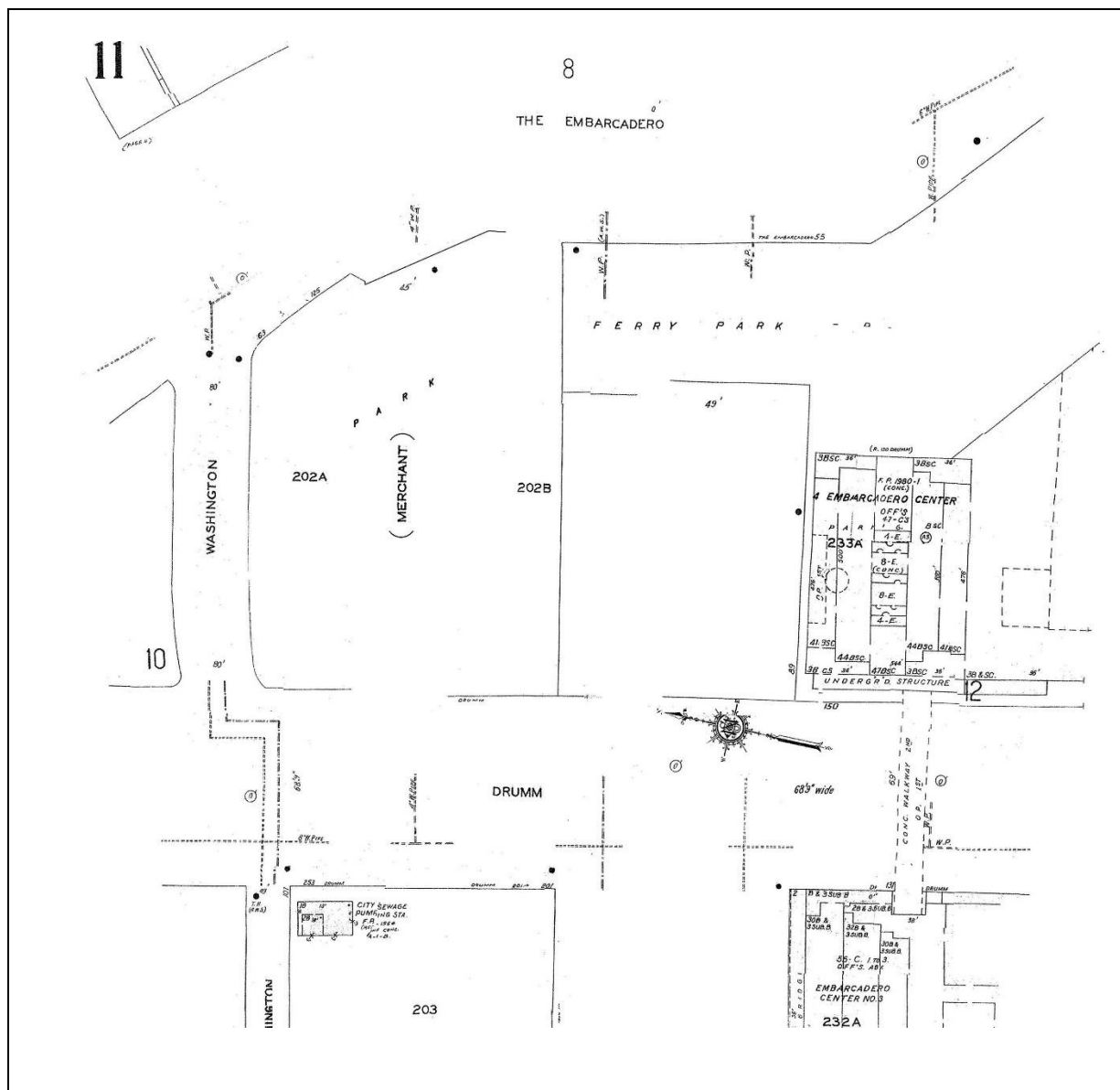


Image 3. 1998 San Francisco Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Volume 1, Sheet 11 shows the northern section of Justin Herman Plaza (indicated as Ferry Park), flanked on its western boundary by Embarcadero Center redevelopment and on its east by The Embarcadero. (San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library)

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*Recorded by January Tavel, ICF *Date March 30, 2016

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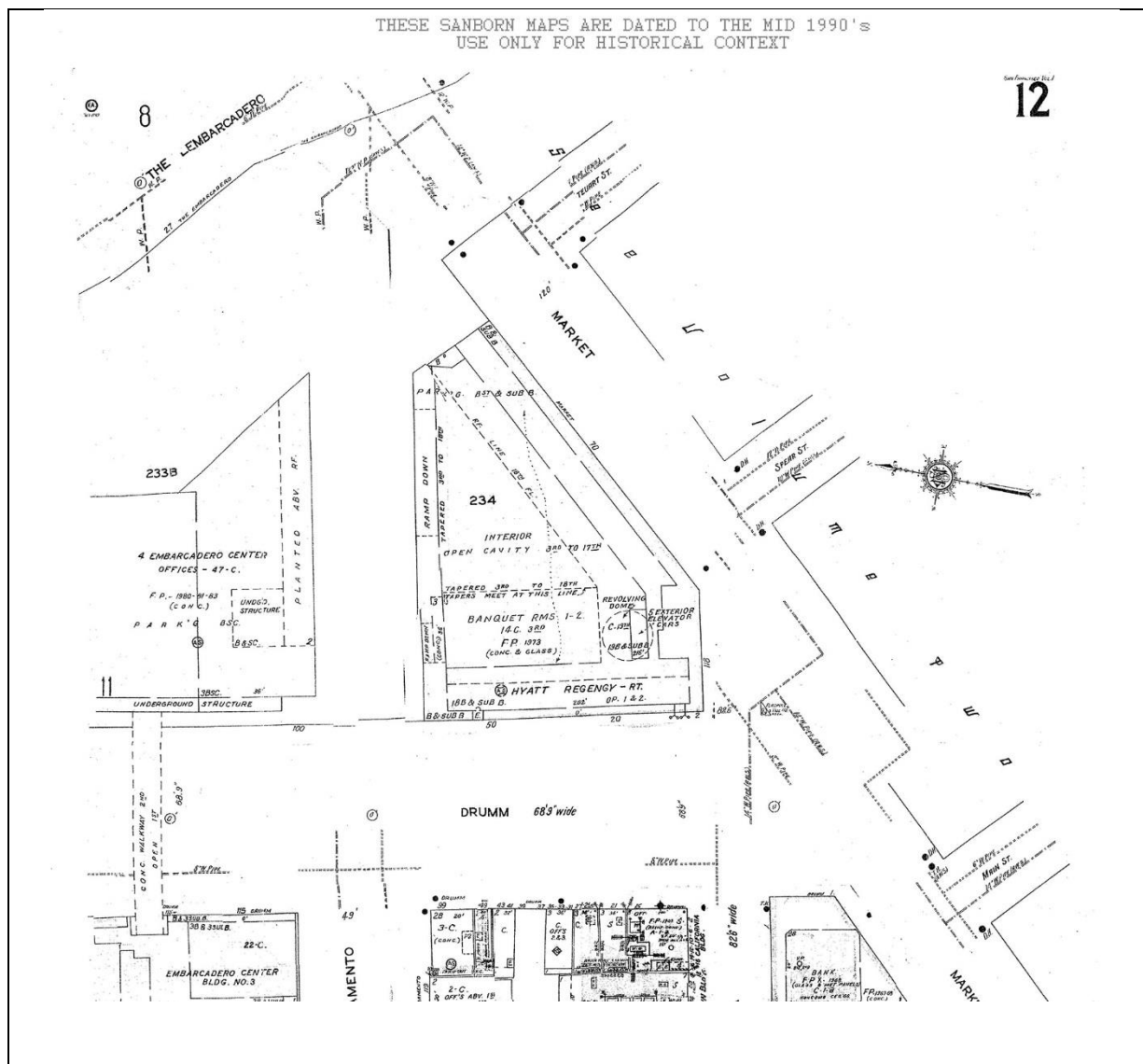


Image 4. 1998 San Francisco Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Volume 1, Sheet 12 shows the center section of Justin Herman Plaza (unlabeled) where its western boundary is flanked by the Embarcadero Center redevelopment, Hyatt Regency, and eastern terminus of Market Street. (San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library)

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Image 5. Justin Herman Plaza, 1979, showing south end of the lower terrace, east of the eastern terminus of Market Street. Lower terrace was paved in brick and featured a concrete platform along its southeastern boundary and a concrete island in the center of its southern section (right). Upper terrace and pedestrian promenade was paved with granite (left). (Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by author. Slide 22E105, by Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.VI.22E.101-127], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)



Image 6. Justin Herman Plaza, 1979, showing north end of the lower terrace paved with brick, featuring Vaillancourt fountain position in the northeast corner with the Embarcadero Freeway ramp wrapping around the plaza's northern boundary. (Photograph of Slide Sheet [cropped] by author. Slide 22E104, by Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.VI.22E.101-127], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.)



Image 7. The promenade of Justin Herman Plaza connected the eastern terminus of Market Street to the Embarcadero as a pedestrian space with the main terraced plaza to the north (left) and lawn in the south



Image 8. The southern section of the plaza featured a lawn open space backed by poplar trees on the eastern boundary and London planetrees on the western boundary. (Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by

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(right). (Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by author. Sheet 1479R16-5, Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.IV.A.90], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)

author. Sheet 1479R16-9, Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.IV.A.90], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)



Image 9. Justin Herman Plaza's upper terrace and promenade originally featured granite paving and square light poles with translucent glass. In addition, the Embarcadero Freeway off-ramps to Clay and Washington Street wrapped around the plaza's northern boundary, and pine and poplar trees lined the eastern boundary adjacent to the freeway. (Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by author. Sheet 1479R47, Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.IV.A.90], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)

Image 10. Small-scale features in Justin Herman plaza included stone planting tubs and square light poles with square translucent glass. (Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by author. Sheet 1479R22-3, Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.IV.A.90], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)

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Image 11. Justin Herman Plaza, 1979, western boundary adjacent to Embarcadero Center development with concrete steps joining upper and lower terraces, featuring circular planters. *Photograph of Slide Sheet [cropped] by author. Slide 2C725, by Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.VI.2C.101-740], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.*

Image 12. The western boundary of Justin Herman Plaza's upper terrace, adjacent to the Embarcadero Center development, featured granite paving and included wood benches. *(Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by author. Sheet 1479R29-7, Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.IV.A.90], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania).*

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Image 13. The statue of Juan Bautista de Anza was placed at the southern end of Justin Herman Plaza, adjacent to the lawn. (*Photograph of Contact Sheet [cropped] by author. Sheet 1479R6-10, Joshua Friedwald, dated 1979 [014.IV.A.90], Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.*)

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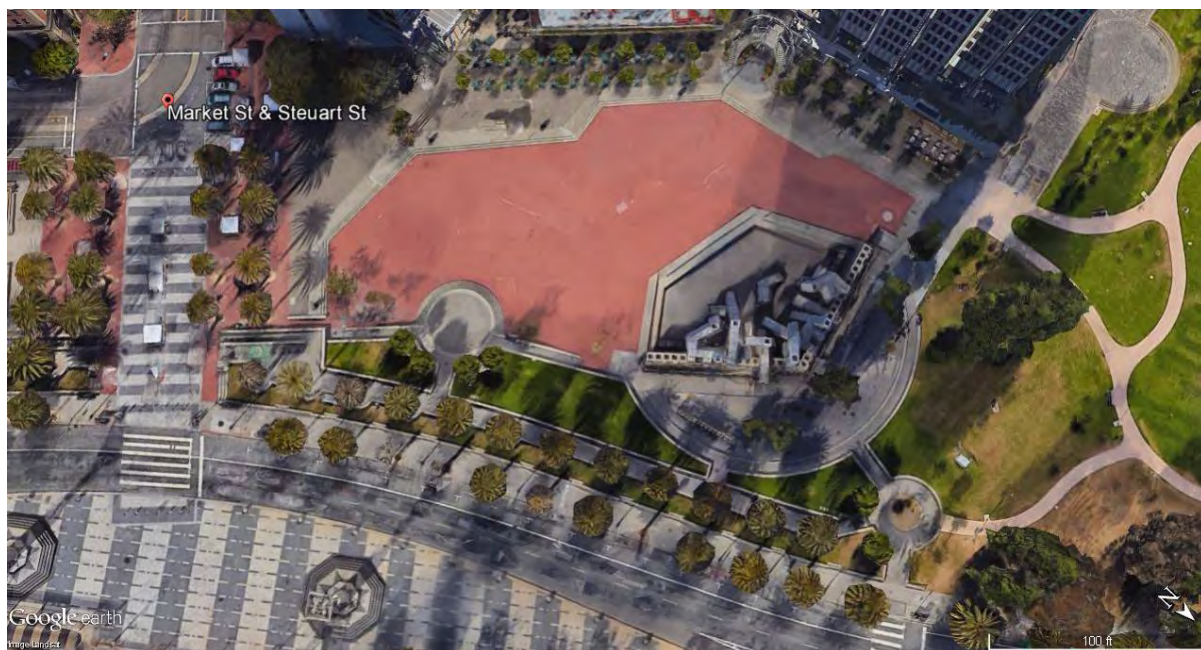


Image 14. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing the northern section of the plaza that still features the main plaza with Valliancourt-designed fountain. However, the plaza has lost its center island and hardscaping along the eastern boundary also has been altered. The Embarcadero Freeway and off-ramps have been removed. (Google Earth 2016)



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Image 15. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing the center section (featuring the pedestrian promenade), which has been significantly altered since the MSRP era with removal of lighting, replacement of bollards and paving, and addition of palm trees. (Google Earth 2016)



Image 16. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing the southern section of the plaza, which has been redeveloped with bocce courts (concrete hardscaping with decomposed granite and grass) and palm tree plantings. (Google Earth 2016)



Image 17. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016. Promenade pedestrian circulation space remains intact, but paving has been replaced, MSRP-era lighting has been



Image 18. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing radiating pattern of brick in main plaza that has been retained. (Photograph by author, March 2016)

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removed and paving has been altered. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



Image 19. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing the addition of stairs as part of the 2003 renovation. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



Image 20. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing London planetrees in lower plaza. These may have been added when the lower plaza island was removed. (Photograph by author, March 2016)

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Image 21. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing palm trees along Embarcadero that have replaced poplars and pine trees. (Photographs by author joined into panorama with Photoshop image stitching, March 2016)



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Image 22. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing potted Queen palms clustered around light poles. (Photograph by author, March 2016)

Image 23. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing Canary Island date palms lining the promenade. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



Image 24. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing view of plaza, ferry building and bay bridge, and Embarcadero Center development. (Photographs by author joined into panorama with Photoshop image stitching, March 2016)



Image 25. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing plaza fountain. (Photograph by author, March 2016)

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Image 26. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing bocce courts in the plaza's southern-most section. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



Image 27. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing new bollards located at the Market Street entrance of the plaza's promenade. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



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Image 28. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing example of non-MSRP-era trash receptacle placed in plaza. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



Image 29. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing new public toilet structure placed in plaza between the main plaza and the pedestrian promenade. (Photograph by author, March 2016)



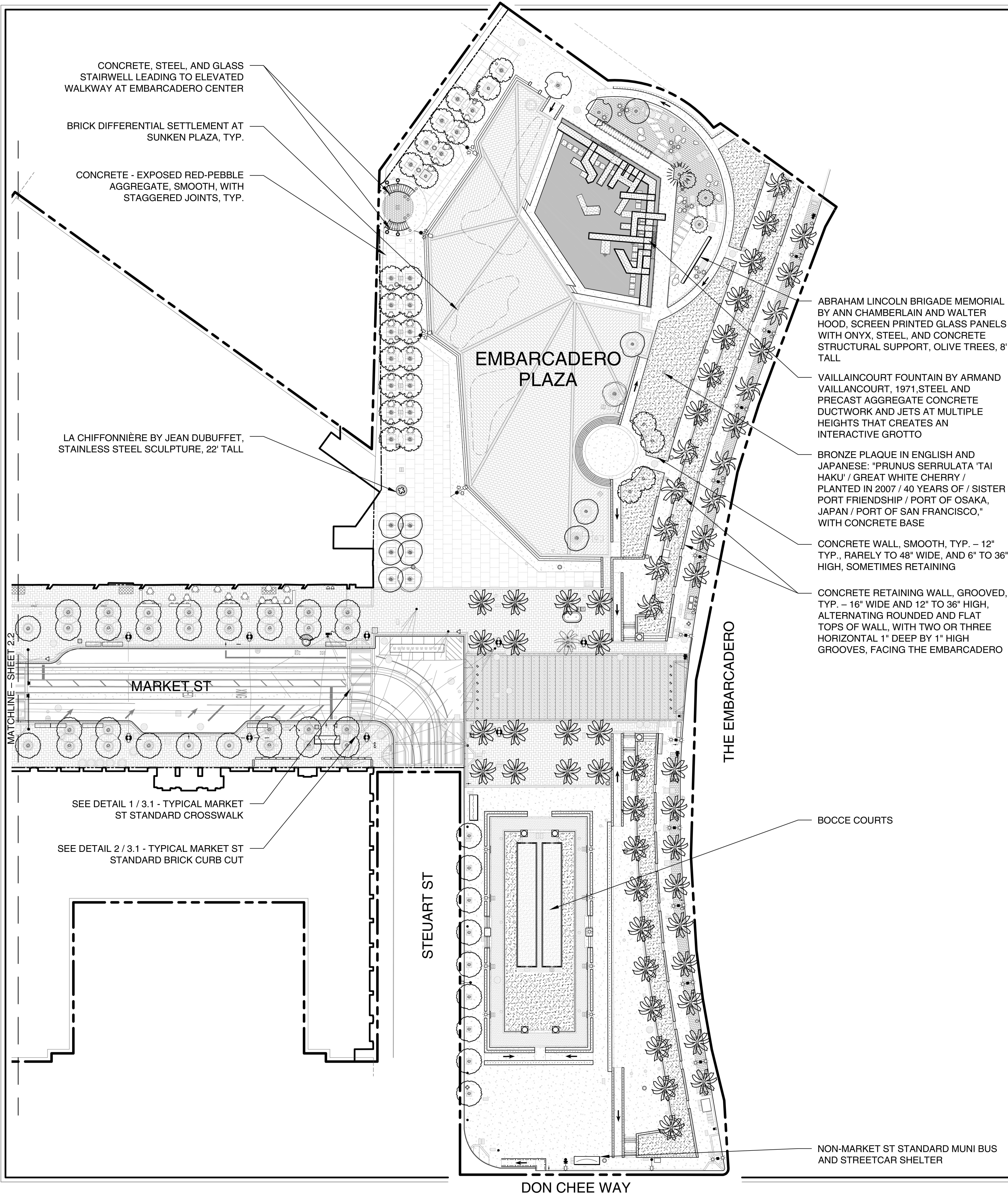
Image 30. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing patio dining tables and Ginkgo trees along boundary with Embarcadero Center that have replaced MSRP-era benches. (Photograph by author, March 2016)

Image 31. Justin Herman Plaza, 2016, showing new public artwork introduced to the plaza since its completion. (Photograph by author, March 2016)

Appendix G – Select 2022 HALS Drawings

Select drawing of Embarcadero Plaza from the 2022 Market Street Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) documentation package prepared by PGAdesign. This HALS drawing set was prepared as part of a mitigation measure for the 2019 Better Market Street EIR and submitted to the Library of Congress.²⁸

²⁸ "Market Street, Embarcadero Plaza to Octavia Street, San Francisco, San Francisco County, CA: Drawings from Survey HALS CA-164" (2022), on file at HABS/HAER/HALS Collection at the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, accessed March 4, 2025, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.ca4485.sheet?st=gallery>.



SHEET LEGEND, CONT.

- Structures
- Advertisement panel
 - Concrete - exposed aggregate Vaillancourt
 - Fountain jets
 - Public toilet
 - Utilities and Drainage
 - Drain - trench
 - Standpipe - metal
 - Vent, so.ti. for Muni and BART
 - Ramps, Stairs and Walls
 - Ramp
 - Stairs - concrete
 - Stairs - metal grate fountain access
 - Wall - concrete, horizontal groove decoration, so.ti. retaining
 - Wall - concrete, smooth, so.ti. retaining
 - Wall - concrete, skateboard deterrent
 - Vegetation
 - Bare soil
 - Lawn
 - Falling Tree - Palm

PLANT LIST

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Trees	
<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar maple
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Ginkgo
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive tree
<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>	Canary Island date palm
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Date palm
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots pine
<i>Platanus x hispanica</i>	London plane
<i>Populus nigra var. italica</i>	Lombardy poplar
<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	Lacebark elm
Shrubs, Groundcovers & Vines	
<i>Convolvulus mauritanicus</i>	Ground morning glory
<i>Cyclamen persicum</i>	Persian cyclamen
<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>	Tasmanian tree fern
<i>Hedera helix 'Variegata'</i>	Variegated English ivy
<i>Pleoblastus viridistriatus</i>	Dwarf greenstrie
<i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i>	Yew pine
<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>	Star jasmine

GENERAL LEGEND

- Market Street Cultural Landscape District
- HALS documentation boundary
- Building outline
- Parcel lines
- Parcel lines, beyond documentation boundary
- City block, beyond documentation boundary
- Survey control points
- Paving
- Asphalt
 - Brick - herringbone
 - Brick - vertical course, single; double
 - Concrete
 - Decomposed granite
- Curbs
- Curb - granite, Market Street standard
- Barriers, Fences, and Rails
- Handrail or guardrail - metal
- Lighting
- Street lights - Path of Gold Light replica
- Site furnishings
- Bicycle rack
 - Cafe table and seating
 - Electric bicycle sharing station
 - Newspaper rack
 - Planter box - freestanding, see Plant List
 - Plaque, bronze - street name marker
 - Tree well - bronze grate; decomposed granite
 - Waste receptacle - concrete; metal; plastic with solar panel; metal frame mounted to guardrail
- Structures
- Newstand with awning
- Roadway Features
- Historic streetcar rails
 - Overhead electric transit wires, guy wires
 - Pedestrian crossing signal or actuator
 - Traffic light - semaphore-style
 - Traffic light - pole, painted metal; with pedestrian crossing signal or actuator
 - Sign - traffic
 - Striping - general; bus lane; bike sharrow
- Utilities and Drainage
- Fire hydrant - AWSS; non-AWSS, 4 valves
 - Call box - Market St standard
 - Utility box - metal, 3'-8" H, 18"-4" W
 - Utility pole - metal, 3'-6" W; 12'-14" W
 - Covers for below grade structures
 - Metal, 6'-36" W; brick band
 - Missing, filled with asphalt; concrete
 - Brick
 - Drain inlets
- Vegetation
- Shrubs, groundcover, grasses
 - Stump or dead tree
 - Falling tree

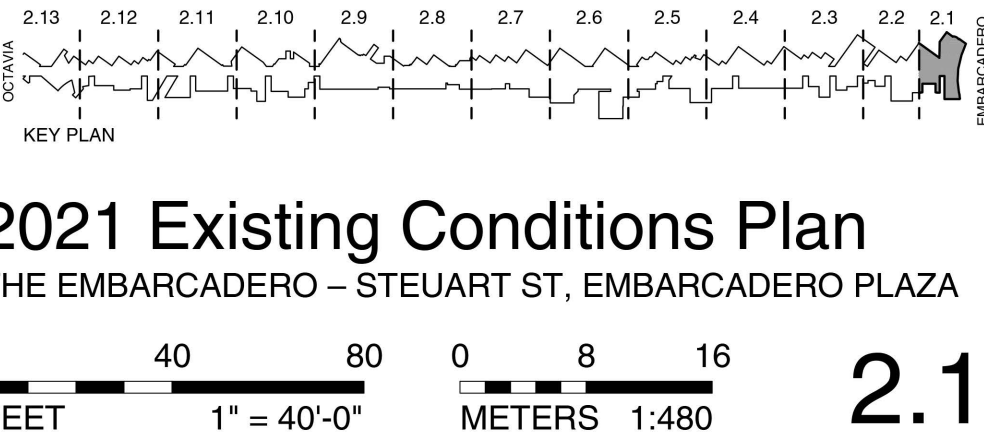
SHEET LEGEND

- Paving
- Asphalt - patch
 - Brick - elongated size, at sunken plaza
 - Double header course at sunken plaza edges, radial sunburst bands, tree grates
 - Running bond
 - Cobble - rusticated, mortared joints
 - Concrete - exposed red-pebble aggregate, smooth, staggered joints
 - Granite - pavers, 5' wide by 3' long slabs
- Barriers, Fences, and Rails
- Fence - chain link, with chain link cover
 - Guardrail - round, metal
- Lighting
- In-ground light
 - Plaza light - bronze painted, floodlights, flagpole, 50'-70' H
 - Street light - acorn style, 1-2 bulbs, decorative; painted teal; so. ti. with solar panels, traffic sign, pedestrian crossing signal or actuator
 - Street light - black, 3 lantern heads
 - Street light - galvanized, security wall-packs
 - Tree trunk-mounted lights, pair of
- Site furnishings
- Ashtray - pole-mounted
 - Bollard - metal
 - Boulders - natural stone
 - Parking meter
 - Pet waste bag dispenser
 - Planter - freestanding, with trellis; see Plant List
 - Plaque, bronze - private property marker
 - Seating - bar stools, table, as decorative barrier
 - Sharps receptacle
 - Sign - wayfinding
 - Tree grate - concrete

Citations:

2016 "Topographic Survey for Better Market Street Between Steuart Street and Octavia Street Prepared for SFPW Infrastructure Design & Construction Division & Highways Section." Bureau of Street Use and Mapping, San Francisco Public Works, City and County of San Francisco. 29 June 2016.

2020 Historical Resources Evaluation Report for the Better Market Street Project, California Department of Transportation, District 4, San Francisco County, California. ICF. January 2020. Prepared for San Francisco Public Works and California Department of Transportation, District 4, Oakland, California. Federal ID: STPL-5934(180).



Appendix H – Preparer Qualifications

This Historic Resource Review report was prepared by Page & Turnbull of San Francisco, California. Page & Turnbull staff responsible for this report include Carolyn Kiernat, FAIA, Principal-in-Charge; Elisa Skaggs, AIA, project manager; and Hannah Simonson, Senior Cultural Resources Planner, and Samantha Purnell, Cultural Resources Planner, co-authors. All staff involved meet or exceed the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Historic Architecture, Architectural History, or History.



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